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# MEMOIRS OF AN AMERICAN LADY

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Mrs. Grant of Laggan

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# MEMOIRS OF AN AMERICAN LADY

WITH SKETCHES OF MANNERS AND SCENES IN AMERICA AS THEY EXISTED PREVIOUS TO THE REVOLUTION

By MRS. ANNE MacVicar GRANT
*Author of "Letters from the Mountains," etc.*

WITH UNPUBLISHED LETTERS AND A MEMOIR OF MRS. GRANT
*By* JAMES GRANT WILSON

*IN TWO VOLUMES · VOLUME ONE*

*NEW YORK* · DODD, MEAD AND COMPANY · *MDCCCCI*

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THIS EDITION

OF

AN ADMIRED AMERICAN CLASSIC,

WHICH FIRST APPEARED ALMOST A CENTURY AGO,

IS DEDICATED

BY THE AUTHOR'S GODSON

TO

MRS. JOHN V. L. PRUYN

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# PREFACE

MRS. GRANT'S "Memoirs of an American Lady" has long been out of print, having become so scarce that the volume was almost unobtainable, and then only at an exorbitant price. By many it is believed that so charming a picture of Colonial life in New York nearly a century and a half ago, should not be permitted to pass away. It is not a romance nor a tale partly founded on reality, but it is an authentic record of facts, — a record which was much admired by Francis Jeffrey, Washington Irving, Sir Walter Scott, Robert Southey, William M. Thackeray,[1] and other great heirs of fame, one of whom praised the description of the breaking up of the ice in the Upper Hudson "as quite Homeric." George Bancroft said, "Your kinswoman, Mrs. Grant's, invaluable volume, should be in the library of every American lady."

[1] A presentation copy of the original edition of "The American Lady," received by the author of "Henry Esmond," from a member of Mrs. Grant's family, and now included in Major William H. Lambert's unequalled collection of Thackerayana, was among the "Great Thacker's" most highly prized literary treasures. The writer is the fortunate possessor of almost all her publications, being copies received from Mrs. Grant by his father, containing complimentary inscriptions.

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In preparing a new edition of this genuine picture of our ancestors prior to the amazing changes produced by the Revolution, — a picture which Paulding informed me suggested "The Dutchman's Fireside," — it has been thought that some account of the good and gifted lady to whom the world is indebted for the Memoir of Mrs. Schuyler would be acceptable, as well as the numerous accompanying notes. A number of these were contributed to the edition of 1876, by Joel Munsell, the Albany antiquarian, while other notes were supplied two decades after that date, by the late George W. Schuyler. In the Appendix will be found a sheaf of Mrs. Grant's hitherto unpublished letters, addressed to Mrs. Alexander Hamilton and Dr. Joseph G. Cogswell between the years 1819–1834, that it is believed will enhance the value of the volume. A fine steel portrait of the author appears as a frontispiece. For the larger portion of the illustrations of ancient Albany that are included, the editor is indebted to the courtesy of Col. Augustus Pruyn, who made the photographs from which they are reproduced.

That Mrs. Grant should, in respect to persons and places, have made some slight errors in her admirable memoir of Mrs. Schuyler, is not surprising; the marvel is that so few appear in her pages, when it is remembered that the work was written nearly half a century after the occurrence of the events described, entirely from memory, and that too the recollections of a child between the age of three and

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thirteen! Mrs. Grant had neither the aid of letters, a diary, or data of any description in the preparation of the Memoir, which first appeared in London, in 1808, and was republished in Boston and New York during the following year. The last of the numerous editions printed since those dates in the new world and old, was issued in Albany precisely a quarter of a century ago.

J. G. W.

NEW YORK, *September*, 1901.

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# MEMOIR OF MRS. GRANT

MRS. ANNE GRANT, commonly styled of Laggan, to distinguish her from her friend and contemporary Mrs. Grant of Carron,[1] was born at Glasgow, February 21, 1755. Her father, Duncan MacVicar, who is described as a plain, brave, pious man, was an officer in the 77th infantry, a Highland regiment; her mother a descendant of the family of Stewart of Invernahyle. "My father," writes Mrs. Grant, "was born in the parish of Craignish, in Argyllshire, and was early left an orphan. He removed, when a young man, to Fort William in Inverness-shire, where he had some concern in farming along with his relation Captain MacVicar. In 1753, he married my mother, who was a grand-daughter of Mr. Stewart of Invernahyle, an ancient family in the neighboring county of Argyll. Sometime afterwards my parents removed to Glasgow." Her maternal grand-uncle, Alexander Stewart of Invernahyle, was the prototype of the Baron of Bradwardine in "Waverley." Sir Walter, in the introduction to a new edition in 1829,

[1] Mrs. Elizabeth Grant, author of "Roy's Wife of Aldivalloch."

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says, "Stewart was a noble specimen of the old Highlander, far descended, gallant, courteous, and brave even to chivalry." Mrs. Grant, it may be mentioned, was one of the first to recognize his ideal representation in "Waverley," and to express the opinion that the work was written by Scott, who in her judgment was not, in that work, altogether just to her beloved Highlanders. "The only particular," writes Mrs. Grant, "of my infantine history that I remember to have heard related, took place in the streets of Glasgow, and I mention it to show at what an early age children observe and remember. My mother lived in the eastern extremity of the town: I suppose she often spoke to others, though not to me, of my father being in America, and might very probably point westward when describing in what direction the *New World* lay to some one who knew still less than myself of geography. Be that as it may, I certainly set off one Sunday evening when I was at most two years and eight months old, and walked deliberately by myself very nearly a mile to the western extremity of the Trongate; how much further I might have gone is not known. A lady looking out of a window saw with some surprise a child neatly dressed in white, with bare head and arms, walking alone and unattended in the middle of the street. She sent for me and asked me where I came from. I said 'mamma's house;' I could tell no more. She next questioned me where I was going. I answered

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in my imperfect manner that I was going to America to seek papa." [1]

Soon after this event, Mrs. MacVicar and her daughter sailed for the New World and settled at Claverack on the Hudson, where her husband was stationed with a party of Highlanders. Here Anne was taught to read by her mother, and learned to speak Dutch. An intelligent sergeant of the company made her a proficient in writing, and observing her eager thirst for knowledge presented his precocious little pupil with an appropriate soldier's gift, — even the poem of Wallace by the patriotic Scottish Homer, Blind Harry. The quaint and almost forgotten language in which this work is written, as well as its obsolete orthography, would have made it a sealed book to the half Scottish, half American child, had it not been for the kindness of the sergeant, who taught her to decipher words and to understand the meaning of the ancient minstrel. From this source she in part derived that enthusiastic love of her native land, "Where blooms the red heather and thistle sae green," which ever afterwards was a distinguishing feature in her character.

In 1760, Captain MacVicar, who had taken part in the disastrous expedition to Ticonderoga and been stationed at Oswego, was sent back to Claverack to conduct a company to the former place.

[1] "Mrs. Grant's Memoirs and Correspondence," 3 vols., London, 1844.

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His wife and daughter accompanied the detachment on the picturesque and perilous journey through the wilderness to Oswego, concerning which Mrs. Grant remarks in her "Memoirs of an American Lady," "I am convinced that I thought more in that fortnight, that is, acquired more ideas and took more lasting impressions, than ever I did in the same space of time in my life." The commandant of the post was our old friend Major Duncan of Lundie,[1] whose portrait is given in Cooper's "Last of the Mohicans," and also by Mrs. Grant, who describes him as an experienced, humane, judicious yet obstinate officer, and somewhat of a humorist withal. In her sixth year Anne was familiar with the Old Testament, and read with eagerness and pleasure Milton's "Paradise Lost," a poem which has daunted so many youthful readers at the outset. Her talents, in the summer of 1762, attracted the attention of Madame Schuyler, with whom she resided at Albany for several years, acquiring during her sojourn among her hospitable friends an additional knowledge of the Dutch language at that day much spoken by many of the best families.

A few years after the conquest of Canada, MacVicar resigned his position in the army, going on the half-pay list in 1765, and became a settler in Vermont, where he received a grant of land from the British government, to which he made large additions by purchase from his brother officers. While

[1] Afterwards Colonel Duncan, elder brother of Lord Camperdown.

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here, his worth and agreeable manners won for him and his family the esteem of all the neighboring settlers. His career of prosperity was, however, interrupted by ill-health and low spirits, and in 1768 he decided to return to his native land. Anne accompanied her parents, and at the age of thirteen she left America never to see it again. Unfortunately for MacVicar, he took his departure from the country without disposing of his property, which, upon the breaking out of the Revolutionary War soon after, was confiscated by the new republican government. He was therefore compelled to depend chiefly upon his limited pay as a barrack-master of Fort Augustus, in Inverness-shire, to which position he had been appointed in 1773, and his daughter was no longer looked upon as a young American heiress.

With her journey from Glasgow to that place, which she could reach only by riding on horseback, commences the portion of Mrs. Grant's correspondence that was published under the title of "Letters from the Mountains." On the first evening after her arrival at the fort, she met the Rev. James Grant, the military chaplain, an accomplished scholar of somewhat romantic character, connected with several of the first families of the district. Her residence at Fort Augustus was terminated by her marriage to this gentleman in the year 1779, when they removed to the parish of Laggan, in Inverness-shire, to which Mr. Grant had been appointed.



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On becoming the wife of a Highland clergyman, Mrs. Grant desired to aid her husband, but a difficulty opposed her progress at the outset. Although a Mac, she was not a Highlander, and she did not possess the most essential passport to a Highland heart, a knowledge of their language. Undeterred, however, by an obstacle which few Lowlanders comparatively except enthusiasts like Professor Blackie have ever surmounted, she, by great application, soon acquired a sufficient knowledge of Gaelic to converse freely with the people in their own tongue, and was successful in translating the poetry of the Highlands. One of her earliest translations, "The Aged Bard's Wish," is a composition of singular elegance and pathos, remarkable for certain allusions to the age and imagery of Ossian. With the Celtic language she studied the manners and feelings of the Highlanders, and was soon able to identify herself with the parishioners among whom her lot was cast; and they on their part appreciated these kind labors of a stranger with true Highland enthusiasm, and felt that she was their own countrywoman in heart and soul as well as in tongue and lineage. Mrs. Grant studied their "folklore," and was successful in relieving much distress among the peasantry of the surrounding district.

Her lines had fallen in pleasant places. In the simple life of a secluded Highland parish, many happy and tranquil years passed in Laggan, and

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LOCH LAGGAN, WHERE QUEEN VICTORIA AND PRINCE ALBERT RESIDED SOON AFTER THEIR MARRIAGE

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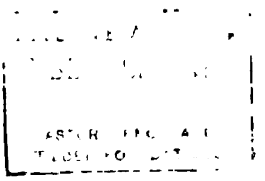

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Mrs. Grant, the mother of twelve children, seemed destined to be one of those "of whom Fame speaks not" but

> "Gentle hearts rejoice
> Around their steps — till silently they die."

"The circles of our felicities," writes Sir Thomas Browne, "make short arches." Who shall question the wise axiom of the good old knight of Norwich? After four successive deaths in her family, Mr. Grant, who was constitutionally delicate, passed away in the year 1801,[1] and his widow was left with eight children dependent upon her exertions, while the manse, for more than a score of years her happy home, must be given up to his successor. On examining their affairs, Mrs. Grant found that she had been left in debt to a considerable amount, the scale of clerical and Highland hospitality on which the household had been conducted having greatly exceeded the amount of her husband's moderate stipend.

Among her many friends Mrs. Grant had long been known as a writer of verses, having in her ninth year essayed imitations of Milton, and composed several songs and poems while residing on the banks of the Clyde, before the family proceeded to Fort Augustus. "I had early," she writes, "dis-

[1] When the writer visited the parish of Laggan where the Rev. James Grant is buried, he found the good man's memory and that of his gifted wife were still cherished among the descendants of the warm-hearted Highlanders, who were so deeply attached to them during their twenty-one years' residence there.

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covered a faculty for rhyming, scarcely worthy to be dignified with the name of poetry, but easy and fluent." Mrs. Grant was urged to collect and publish these productions with a view to aiding in the support of her family, and as an inducement three thousand subscribers were speedily obtained under the patronage of the celebrated Duchess of Gordon, one of whose summer seats was at Kinrara near Laggan. In 1803, "The Highlanders and other Poems" appeared in a well-printed octavo volume, the profits of which enabled Mrs. Grant to discharge the debts which had hung most heavily on her mind. Of a few songs which proceeded from her pen, only that charming one generally known from its melody as "The Blue Bells of Scotland" has outlived their author. The genius of Mrs. Grant was not lyrical; but in all her poetical productions there is a steady current of harmony and good sense, more indicative of the shrewd observer than the poet.

Perceiving from the surprising success of her poems a prospect of better maintaining her family by her literary efforts, Mrs. Grant sorrowfully abandoned the small farm near Laggan which she had leased after her husband's death, and removed to a sequestered spot in the neighborhood of Stirling. Besides her own family, including her mother, she had with her three girls from the West Indies, who were placed under her care. Her pecuniary resources were increased by the compensation which

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she received for this charge, and they continued to be so from a similar source for thirty years. Many young ladies were successively inmates of her family. The number was usually restricted to three or four, and the deep interest she felt in them and the affection which they retained for her contributed greatly to her happiness. The benefit which Mrs. Grant was expected to afford the fortunate inmates of her household was chiefly in forming their mind and manners, and at a later period an introduction into the Edinburgh literary society in which she moved. Among her many pupils was the mother of the late Duke of Argyll[1] and Miss Harriet Douglas[2] of New York, later Mrs. Douglas Cruger, with whom she maintained for many years a correspondence terminated only by her death. On one occasion the latter came down late to breakfast to Mrs. Grant's great annoyance, as she was fond of punctuality and showed her displeasure by not speaking. By way of atoning for her

[1] Writing from Inverary Castle on his return from a visit to the Marquis of Lorne, then Governor-General of Canada, the Duke says, "I have been reading, with unfeigned interest, your new edition of 'The American Lady,' for which I was indebted to you when we met in New York. Mrs. Grant possessed a powerful and sensitive mind, and her writings have afforded me both profit and pleasure, her admirable memoir of Mrs. Schuyler perhaps more than any other. Your account of the author adds value to the attractive volume."

[2] Sir John Watson Gordon's full-length portrait of Mrs. Grant was painted for Miss Douglas, and by her heirs presented in 1876, through George L. Schuyler of New York, to her daughter-in-law, Mrs. Grant, of Edinburgh. It is now the property of her son.

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fault, Miss Douglas endeavored to be very agreeable, and to engage Mrs. Grant in conversation, when the old lady at length said,

"If I make a remark,
It will be of the lark," [1]

In 1806, Mrs. Grant's second work was published by the Longmans of London, entitled "Letters

[1] In a letter now before the writer, dated Rome, May 3, 1832, Miss Douglas sends Mrs. Grant an account of Sir Walter Scott, at that time in Italy with the vain hope of improving his shattered health: "Sir Walter Scott, who made us take a stirrup-cup with him the morning that we left Rome, goes the same way, *via* Venice, the Tyrol, and the Rhine, to Brussels, and it may be that he will overtake us, which would certainly be a great compensation for the delays that have occurred, to have the pleasure of his company and the benefit of his advice and judgment in these perplexing times [the cholera was then prevailing in portions of Europe]. He is brightened, I think, but not permanently bettered, by his journey. He did us the honor to take a drive with George [her brother, George Douglas, of New York] and myself, in the Appian Way, visiting the various tombs and curiosities that it offers. Sir Walter was with us from ten till four, and George amused him by repeating several extracts from his own poems, inspired by the quotations and anecdotes of his animated conversation. Afterward he went to see the portrait an American artist has been making of me, at his own request. It is to be yours during your lifetime, and you will receive it in a few weeks. The one by Sir William Beechy is still with him, and I do not know what I shall do about it, as every one condemns the likeness, and I shall have no opportunity of sitting for another.

"One morning when I was breakfasting with Sir Walter I received your last letter, and I read to him the portion where you say among the thousand and one reasons for your love and admiration of him was his charming Doric, so redolent of youth and its innocent enjoyments. I have no time to describe the royal wedding I attended at Naples last week, when the King's sister was married to the Prince of Spain. His Majesty graciously invited us to be present, although we had not then been presented."

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from the Mountains," which had been written chiefly to her correspondents from the manse during a long series of years. They were so full of Highland scenery, character and legends, expressed in the happiest style of epistolary composition, that even with the omission of whatever was private or of a confidential character, they proved exceedingly popular and rapidly passed through several editions. "No person, I believe," wrote Mrs. Grant, "was so astonished at their success as myself;" and when another three hundred pounds was received for the second edition she said: "I calculate and wonder at my own wealth." As pleasant illustrations of the deep interest felt in the letters and their writer, it may be mentioned that three wealthy Scotch merchants of London, with whom Mrs. Grant had no previous acquaintance, sent her a present of three hundred pounds, and through the exertions of Miss Anne Cabot Lowell, Mrs. Josiah Quincy, and a few other ladies of Boston, also unknown to Mrs. Grant, an American edition of her "Letters from the Mountains" was published in that city, and a thousand dollars was remitted to her as the proceeds. In her

[1] This kind act was consummated chiefly through the efforts of Miss Lowell, whose brother John Lowell, Jr., became acquainted with Mrs. Grant during his residence of several years in Edinburgh, and left her a legacy of five thousand dollars as a mark of affectionate veneration for her character. Sir William Grant, Master of the Rolls, to whom this work was dedicated, bequeathed Mrs. Grant an annuity of £100 per annum. These legacies, combined with other sources of income during the later years of her long life, not only placed her in

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brief autobiography Mrs. Grant mentions this unlooked for act of kindness in the following words: "Among the many singular events by which a quiet, secluded life has been diversified, one of the most remarkable was the benevolence and warmth of friendship which prompted an American lady of distinguished worth and talents to make a very uncommon exertion in behalf of the subject of this memoir. Meeting accidentally with the 'Letters from the Mountains,' this ardent and superior mind, not satisfied with warm approbation, and the elegant expression of these feelings to the author, actually, with the assistance of some friends, reprinted the work at Boston, and remitted the profits to the author. This lady, now beyond the reach of human praise, closed an exemplary life amidst her fondly attached friends and relations in 1811. She was daughter to the late eminent Judge Lowell, of New England."

Mrs. Grant's best-known work, begun in 1807 at the age of fifty-two, and issued by her friends the Messrs. Longman, of London, in the year following, is entitled "Memoirs of an American Lady." It consists, in addition to her youthful recollections of Margarita Schuyler, who married her cousin, Col. Philip Schuyler[1] of Albany, of descriptions of the simple manners of the descendants of the Dutch

easy circumstances, but permitted Mrs. Grant to gratify her generosity by giving to others.

[1] The distinguished Revolutionary general of the same name was a nephew of Mrs. Schuyler.

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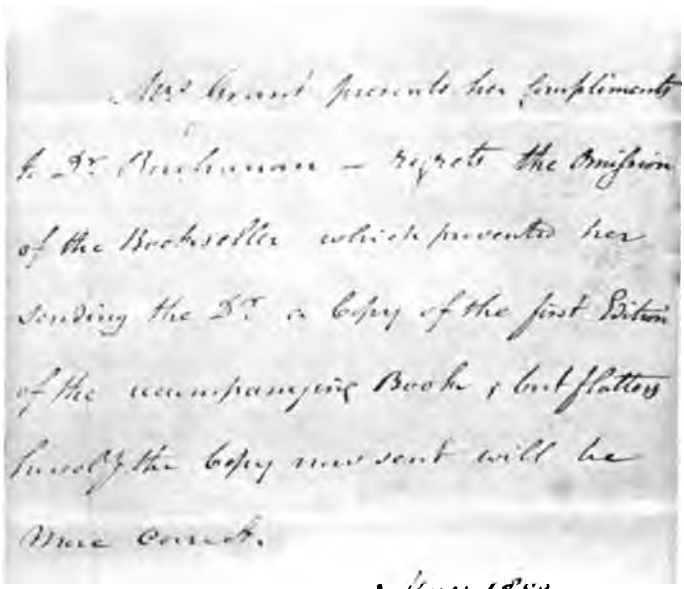
Mrs Grant presents her compliments
to Dr Beckwith — regrets the omission
of the Bookseller which prevented her
sending the Dr a Copy of the first Edition
of the accompanying Book & but flatters
herself the Copy now sent will be
more correct.
May 10th.

FACSIMILE OF NOTE ACCOMPANYING PRESENTATION COPY OF THE SECOND LONDON EDITION OF "THE AMERICAN LADY"

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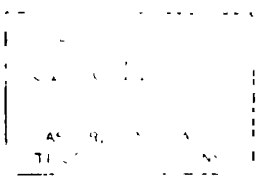

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settlers, sketches of the history of New York, and anecdotes of the Indians. What did not fall within her own personal experiences as a child she appears to have gleaned from the conversation of Mrs. Schuyler and others, and she seems to have forgotten nothing; for the quick-witted child had an observant eye and a mind like Macaulay's, which was

"Wax to receive, and marble to retain."

The volume concludes with two chapters of General Reflections, in which Mrs. Grant, who, like Mrs. Schuyler, was a staunch and true Tory, indulges in lugubrious prophecies of the moral, social, and intellectual future of the country. "What the loss of the Huguenots," she remarks, "was to commerce and manufactures in France, that of the loyalists was to religion, literature, and amenity in America." My excellent godmother should have lived to see our Centennial and Columbian expositions, or the later display of 1901, in Buffalo. A second edition of the work appeared in 1809, and was reprinted the same year in Boston and in New York.[1] Other editions appeared in the latter city in

[1] James K. Paulding, in a prefatory paragraph to his most popular work published in 1831, says, "The idea of the following tale was conceived on reading, many years ago, 'The Memoirs of an American Lady,' by Mrs. Grant, of Laggan; and the work partly finished about that time. The reader acquainted with the book referred to will perhaps wonder at the indiscretion of the author of 'The Dutchman's Fireside' in thus, as it were, provoking a comparison with one of the finest sketches of early American manners ever drawn."

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1836 and 1846, also in Albany in 1876, while a third edition was published in London in 1817.

De Quincey accidentally encountered Mrs. Grant and one of her beautiful daughters in a stage-coach soon after the "Memoirs of an American Lady" first appeared. The charms of the daughter of course were not lost upon the enthusiastic temperament of the opium-eater; but the conversation of the mother seems to have impressed him more deeply. In his "Literary Reminiscences," written many years later, he tells us with much feeling: "Her kindness to me was particularly flattering, and to this day I retain the impression of the benignity which she — an established wit and just then receiving incense from all quarters — showed in her manners to me, — a person wholly unknown." In "Mrs. Fletcher's Autobiography" we also obtain occasional glimpses of Mrs. Grant. The author makes the following record at the time of the visit of George the Fourth to Edinburgh: "Mrs. Grant of Laggan, a great lover of kings, was of our party. The good old lady had, for this joyous occasion, put off her habitual black dress and robed herself in a salmon-colored satin, and with the rest of the party waved her handkerchief as the king appeared. They all had a good laugh at my expense, who, somewhat notorious for being no lover of kings, was actually detected shedding tears and waving my handkerchief, 'like the lave,' as the pageant passed."

In 1810 Mrs. Grant removed to Edinburgh,

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and her residence there was frequented by Lord Jeffrey, Sir Walter Scott, Henry Mackenzie, "Christopher North," the "Ettrick Shepherd," and other magnates of the Scottish literary world. The year following she published her "Essays on the Superstitions of the Highlanders," — a work full of enthusiasm for the character of the people among whom she so long resided. So conspicuous was her pre-eminence in Gaelic literature by her beautiful translations,[1] and by her knowledge of the people, that the earlier volumes of the "Waverley Novels" were frequently attributed to her pen. Mrs. Grant's writings in prose and verse were among the first to draw attention to the romantic scenery and peculiar manners of the Scottish Highlanders, anticipating Walter Scott by more than a decade. It may be mentioned that when our author first met Scott, she thought his appearance "very unpromising and commonplace, yet though no gleam of genius animates his countenance, much of it appears in his conversation, which is rich, varied, easy, and animated."

"Eighteen Hundred and Thirteen," a metrical work, appeared in 1814, followed by her last literary production, entitled "Popular Models and Impressive Warnings for the Sons and Daughters of Industry," which was published in 1815. During the interval of twenty-three years between the publication of the last volume and her death, Mrs.

[1] *Vide* Wilson's "Poets and Poetry of Scotland," 2 vols., Harper's, 1876.

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Grant's literary labors were no longer necessary for her support, but were taken up as recreation. They were confined chiefly to the composition of occasional verses, and to translations from the Gaelic. For one of these, a production of singular elegance and pathos, she in 1824 received the gold medal of the Highland Society. Her last poetical lines were written on her eighty-third birthday.

"When all my earthly treasures fled,
And grief bowed down my drooping head,
Nor faith, nor hope, nor comfort fled.
From bright abodes of peace and love
New strength descended from above,
To cheer me like the patriarch's dove.
Now, though bereft of motion's powers,
I pass no more through groves and flowers,
But moveless waste the languid hours,
While still the ethereal spark divine,
And memory's ample store are mine,
I neither suffer nor repine,
But wait serene the final hour,
Appointed by that Gracious Power,
Who while those vials seemed of wrath,
Shed countless blessings on my path."

No important events varied the even tenor of Mrs. Grant's life or circumstances till the year 1820, when she met with an unfortunate fall which produced permanent lameness, so that ever afterwards she was unable to move about without crutches or a cane. Five years later she received from the British government a pension of £100, in consideration of her literary talents, which, with the profits of her

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writings, the emolument from her pupils, and several legacies from friends, already mentioned, rendered her life free from pecuniary cares.

In 1827, her long series of domestic sorrows terminated in the loss of her only surviving daughter Mary, a pure and lovely character. A friend who visited her at this period wrote: "It was delightful to find you in old age, after such severe trials, so supported and strengthened by the power of God — not resigned merely, possessing not the calm benevolence of age alone; but all the kinder feelings in their freshness and flower, which, beautiful as they are in youth, become so much more deeply interesting when we know that care and sorrow have had no power to wither them, and that they will soon form part of that crown of glory which fadeth not. If we could have forgotten the blessings which God has for a time taken to himself and is reserving for you in his keeping, we might have thought of you only as one,

> "'Whose cheerful day benevolence endears,
> Whose night congratulating conscience cheers,
> The general favorite, as the general friend.'"

Mrs. Grant survived her daughter nearly eleven years, and to the last her sympathies remained unchilled, and she continued to find pleasure in her conversational parties, as well as in receiving visitors, those from America being always most warmly welcomed. Her early attachment to her happy home on the Hudson remained unshaken to the end.

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When my father saw her for the last time she was little changed in appearance from what her portrait painted eight years previous, and from which our engraving is taken, represents her, and was busily knitting, with two large volumes lying open before her in such a manner that she could turn to either and read without interrupting her accustomed work — when she remarked, "Willie, I should not feel any sorrow if I were deprived of all other books. These will suffice for my few remaining days." Mrs. Grant's companions were her Bible and Shakespeare. To the very end of her fourscore and almost four years, she was constantly adding to her wide field of knowledge as a means of usefulness: hers was the spirit of old Chaucer's Oxford scholar, —

"Gladly wolde he lerne, and gladly teche."

Mrs. Grant died at her residence in Manor Place, Edinburgh, November 7, 1838, retaining her faculties unimpaired to the last, and so gradually did her life depart that it may truthfully be said of her in the words of the poet:

"Of no distemper, of no blast she died,
But fell like Autumn fruit, that mellow'd long;
Even wonder'd at because she dropt no sooner.
Fate seemed to wind her up for fourscore years;
Yet freshly ran she on four summers more,
Till, like a clock worn out in eating time,
The wheels of weary life at last stood still."

In a letter announcing Mrs. Grant's death to my father, her son says: "My mother was entirely

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exempted from pain or suffering of any kind, bodily or mental, and she at last appeared to expire in a gentle slumber, leaving her features in the sweetest composure and confirming the assurance she gave us almost to the last that she suffered no pain. Her calmness and tranquillity in the prospect of death were what might have been expected from her firm and blameless life, and above all from her humble confidence in the pardoning mercy of God through the merits of our great Intercessor."

Mrs. Grant was buried beneath the shadows of the stately castle of Edinburgh, in what is known as the Auld West Kirk, and near her last resting-place is the grave of Thomas DeQuincey. From her tombstone we copied the following inscription:

Sacred to the memory of
Mrs. Anne Grant,
Widow of the Rev. James Grant of Laggan
In the county of Inverness,
Who died at Edinburgh,
7th November, 1838,
aged 83.
Endowed with the extraordinary energy of mind
Her writings
Illustrate the associations and scenes
Of her eventful life.
Her eminent virtues adorned its relations,
Her Christian faith and fortitude sustained
Its many severe afflictions
In humble submission to
The Will of God.

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Her numerous family of children,
for whom she made
Most meritorious and successful exertions,
was by the will of a mysterious providence
All cut off before herself
except him who has made
This Memorial
Of his love and veneration.

The brilliant literary galaxy with glorious Sir Walter for its brightest star, which cast its splendor over the beautiful city of Edinburgh were almost all included among Mrs. Grant's friends and acquaintances, and many of the group were frequent visitors at her house. There also were to be met most of the educated Americans worth knowing, who passed through that famous city during more than a quarter of a century that the Northern Athens was Mrs. Grant's place of residence. Many of the latter became her attached friends and correspondents, as will be seen by the letters included in the appendix to this volume. Joanna Baillie, Southey, Wordsworth, Mrs. Hemans, the "sublime Mr. Hayley," as Thackeray calls him, and Campbell were also among her correspondents. "Your good old godmother," said Washington Irving, "was a great Tory, but always gave Americans a cordial welcome," and dear Dr. "Rab" Brown remarked at our last meeting in Edinburgh, "Mrs. Grant was one of the literary boasts of our city, universally known and respected."

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"Mrs. Grant," remarks Lord Cockburn,[1] one of her Scottish contemporaries, "was a tall dark woman of very considerable intellect, great spirit, and the warmest benevolence. Her love of individual whigs, particularly of Jeffrey, in spite of her amusing horror of their principles, was honorable to the heart. She was always under the influence of an affectionate and delightful enthusiasm, which, unquenched by time or sorrow, survived the wreck of many domestic attachments and shed a glow over the close of a very protracted life. Both she and Mrs. Hamilton[2] were remarkable for the success of their literary conversational gatherings. Their evening parties had the greater merit from the smallness of their houses and of their means."

At the age of three score and ten Mrs. Grant began a sketch of her life, which contains a rapid view of the principal incidents of her career from her birth down to 1806, leaving the story of the last thirty years of her long and eventful life to be told by another. This was lovingly done by her only surviving child, John P. Grant, W. S.,[3] who in 1844 issued a collection of her letters with a memoir, in three volumes. Revised editions of this delightful work appeared in 1845 and 1853,

[1] "Memorials of His Time," by Henry Cockburn, London, 1856.

[2] Mrs. Elizabeth Hamilton, author of "The Cottagers of Glenburnie."

[3] Mr. Grant died December 15, 1870, leaving a widow and four children, two of whom were sons in the service of the British Government. Mrs. J. P. Grant died in 1893, and their son Walter in 1897.



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also from the press of the Longmans. A writer who was well acquainted with Mrs. Grant, remarks in a notice of the work, that "she was a woman of extraordinary good sense, and of uncommon powers of mind; whose letters, embracing a wide variety of subjects, are as truly valuable as those of any other writer, and likely to be of as permanent interest, and to afford as lasting gratification; but especially of a woman of great strength of character, formed by religious principle and penetrated by religious sentiment, the vital principle of whose moral being was faith in God and immortality, whose sympathies were warm and diffusive, and who was full of disinterested kindness."

We would gladly quote several passages from unpublished letters in our possession addressed to the late William Wilson and his wife, by Mrs. Grant, who gave her husband's name to their eldest son, and also some marked extracts from the published correspondence; but as the chorus to "Henry the Fifth" remarks—"time, numbers and due course of things cannot be here presented." Two good stories, however, we must quote, one of a very handsome and fashionable young gentleman whom Mrs. Grant did not know, who crossed a crowded drawing-room, seized her hand and kissed it, "thirty years and upwards," she says, "after anybody had thought of kissing my hand," and expressed to her the feeling which her poem, "The Highlanders," had awakened in him. The young stranger proved

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to be Colonel D'Este, son of the Duke of Sussex by his marriage with Lady Augusta Murray. Mrs. Grant continues, "I must not omit an anecdote better than my own about kissing. A young lady from England, very ambitious of distinction and thinking the outrageous admiration of genius was nearly as good as the possession of it, was presented to Sir Walter Scott, and had very nearly gone through the regular form of swooning sensibility on the occasion. Being afterwards introduced to the author, Henry Mackenzie, she bore it better and kissed his hand in admiring veneration. It is worth telling for the sake of Mr. Scott's comment. He said, 'did you ever hear the like of that English lass, to faint at the sight of a cripple clerk of session and kiss the dry withered hand of an old tax-gatherer.'"[1]

We cannot better conclude this brief memorial of Mrs. Grant than with the words of Sir Walter Scott, who thus characterizes her productions: "Her literary works, although composed amidst misfortune and privation, are written at once with simplicity and force, and uniformly bear the stamp of a virtuous and courageous mind, recommending to the reader that patience and fortitude which the writer herself practised in such an eminent degree. Her writings, deservedly popular in her own country, derive their success from the happy manner in

[1] Mr. Mackenzie held the office of comptroller of taxes for Scotland.

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which, addressing themselves to the national pride of the Scottish people, they breathe a spirit at once of patriotism and of that candor which renders patriotism unselfish and liberal. We have no hesitation in attesting our belief that Mrs. Grant's writings have produced a strong and salutary effect upon her countrymen, who not only found recorded in them much of national history and antiquities which would otherwise have been forgotten; but found them combined with the soundest and best lessons of virtue and morality."

JAS. GRANT WILSON.

NEW YORK, *September*, 1901.

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# TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE SIR WILLIAM GRANT, *Knt.*

*Master of the Rolls*

SIR;

IT is very probable that the friends, by whose solicitations I was induced to arrange in the following pages my early recollections, studied more the amusement I should derive from executing this task, than any pleasure they could expect from its completion.

The principal object of this work is to record the few incidents, and the many virtues, which diversified and distinguished the life of a most valued friend. Though no manners could be more simple, no notions more primitive than those which prevailed among her associates, the stamp of originality with which they were marked, and the peculiar circumstances in which they stood, both with regard to my friend, and the infant society to which they belonged, will, I flatter myself, give an interest with reflecting minds, even to this desultory narrative; and the miscellany of description, observation, and detail, which it involves.

If truth both of feeling and narration, which are its only merits, prove a sufficient counterbalance to carelessness, laxity, and incoherence of style, its

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prominent faults, I may venture to invite you, when you unbend from the useful and honorable labors to which your valuable time is devoted, to trace this feeble delineation of an excellent though unembellished character; and of the rapid pace with which an infant society has urged on its progress from virtuous simplicity to the dangerous "knowledge of good and evil," from tremulous imbecility to self-sufficient independence.

To be faithful, a delineation must necessarily be minute. Yet if this sketch, with all its imperfections, be honored by your indulgent perusal, such condescension of time and talent must certainly be admired, and may perhaps be imitated by others.

I am, Sir, very respectfully,

Your faithful humble servant,

THE AUTHOR.

LONDON, *October*, 1808.

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# MEMOIRS

OF

# AN AMERICAN LADY

## Introduction

To ——,

DEAR SIR,

OTHERS as well as you have expressed a wish to see a memoir of my earliest and most valuable friend.

To gratify you and them I feel many inducements, and see many objections.

To comply with any wish of yours is one strong inducement.

To please myself with the recollection of past happiness and departed worth is another; and to benefit those into whose hands this imperfect sketch may fall, is a third. For the authentic record of an exemplary life, though delivered in the most unadorned manner, or even degraded by poverty of style, or uncouthness of narration, has an attraction for the uncorrupted mind.

It is the rare lot of some exalted characters, by the united power of virtue and of talents, to soar above their fellow-mortals, and leave a luminous

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track behind, on which successive ages gaze with wonder and delight.

But the sweet influence of these benign stars, that now and then enlighten the page of history, is partial and unfrequent.

They to whom the most important parts on the stage of life are allotted, if possessed of abilities undirected by virtue, are too often

"Wise to no purpose, artful to no end,"

that is really good and desirable.

They, again, where virtue is not supported by wisdom, are often, with the best intentions, made subservient to the short-sighted craft of the artful and designing. Hence, though we may be at times dazzled with the blaze of heroic achievement, or contemplate with a purer satisfaction those "awful fathers of mankind," by whom nations were civilized, equitable dominion established, or liberty restored: yet, after all, the crimes and miseries of mankind form such prominent features of the history of every country, that humanity sickens at the retrospect, and misanthropy finds an excuse amidst the laurels of the hero, and the deep-laid schemes of the politician:

"And yet this partial view of things
Is surely not the best." — *Burns.*

Where shall we seek the antidote to this chilling gloom left on the mind by these bustling intricate scenes, where the best characters, goaded on by

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furious factions or dire necessity, become involved in crimes that their souls abhor?

It is the contemplation of the peaceful virtues in the genial atmosphere of private life, that can best reconcile us to our nature, and quiet the turbulent emotions excited by

"The madness of the crowd."

But vice, folly, and vanity are so noisy, so restless, so ready to rush into public view, and so adapted to afford food for malevolent curiosity, that the small still voice of virtue, active in its own sphere, but unwilling to quit it, is drowned in their tumult. This is a remedy, however,

"Not obvious, not obtrusive."

If we would counteract the baleful influence of public vice by the contemplation of private worth, we must penetrate into its retreats, and not be deterred from attending to its simple details by the want of that glare and bustle with which a fictitious or artificial character is generally surrounded.

But in this wide field of speculation one might wander out of sight of the original subject. Let me then resume it, and return to my objections. Of these the first and greatest is the dread of being inaccurate. Embellished facts, a mixture of truth and fiction, or what we sometimes meet with, a fictitious superstructure built on a foundation of reality, would be detestable on the score of bad taste, though no moral sense were concerned or consulted. 'T is

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walking on a river half frozen that betrays your footing every moment. By these repulsive artifices no person of real discernment is for a moment imposed upon. You do not know exactly which part of the narrative is false; but you are sure it is not all true, and therefore distrust what is genuine, where it occurs. For this reason a fiction, happily told, takes a greater hold of the mind than a narrative of facts, evidently embellished and interwoven with inventions.

I do not mean to discredit my own veracity. I certainly have no intention to relate anything that is not true. Yet in the dim distance of near forty years,[1] unassisted by written memorials, shall I not mistake dates, misplace facts, and omit circumstances that form essential links in the chain of narration? Thirty years since, when I expressed a wish to do what I am now about to attempt, how differently should I have executed it. A warm heart, a vivid imagination, and a tenacious memory, were then all filled with a theme which I could not touch without kindling into an enthusiasm, sacred at once to virtue and to friendship. Venerated friend of my youth, my guide, and my instructress, are then the dregs of an enfeebled mind, the worn affections of a wounded heart, the imperfect efforts of a decaying

[1] It will have been seen by the Memoir that Mrs. Grant was born in 1755, came to America in 1757, and returned to Scotland in 1768, at the age of 13; and that she wrote this work in 1808, at the age of 53.

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memory, all that remain to consecrate thy remembrance, to make known thy worth, and to lay on thy tomb the offering of gratitude?

My friend's life, besides being mostly passed in unruffled peace and prosperity, affords few of those vicissitudes which astonish and amuse. It is from her relations, to those with whom her active benevolence connected her, that the chief interest of her story (if story it may be called) arises. This includes that of many persons, obscure indeed but for the light which her regard and beneficence reflected upon them. Yet without those subordinate persons in the drama, the action of human life, especially such a life as hers, cannot be carried on. Those can neither appear with grace, nor be omitted with propriety. Then, remote and retired as her situation was, the variety of nations and characters, of tongues and of complexions, with which her public spirit and private benevolence connected her, might appear wonderful to those unacquainted with the country and the times in which she lived; without a pretty distinct view of which my narrative would be unintelligible. I must be excused, too, for dwelling, at times, on the recollection of a state of society so peculiar, so utterly dissimilar to any other that I have heard, or read of, that it exhibits human nature in a new aspect, and is so far an object of rational curiosity, as well as a kind of phenomenon in the history of colonization. I forewarn the reader not to look for lucid order in the narration, or intimate

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connection between its parts. I have no authorities to refer to, no coeval witnesses of facts to consult. In regard to the companions of my youth, I sit like the "Voice of Cona," alone on the heath; and, like him too, must muse in silence, till at intervals the "light of my soul arises," before I can call attention to "a tale of other times," in which several particulars relative to my friend's ancestry must necessarily be included.

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BIRTHPLACE OF MARGARETTA SCHUYLER,
"THE AMERICAN LADY"

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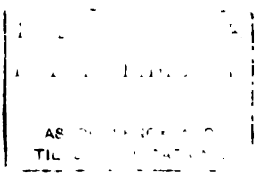

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# Chapter I

## ORIGIN OF THE SETTLEMENT OF ALBANY

IT is well known that the province of New York, anciently called Munhattoes[1] by the Indians, was originally settled by a Dutch colony, which came from Holland, I think, in the time of Charles the Second. Finding the country to their liking, they were followed by others more wealthy and better informed. Indeed some of the early emigrants appear to have been people respectable both from their family and character. Of these the principal were the Cuylers, the Schuylers, the Rensselaers, the DeLanceys, the Cortlandts, the Timbrooks,[2] and

[1] It is not designed to notice for the purpose of rectifying or explaining all the discrepancies of nomenclature, chronology, and other matters, which Mrs. Grant, as she fears on the previous page she might, has fallen into in these pages. Not a few of them were common to the time she describes, but more recent investigations and discoveries have gradually developed a more correct knowledge.

The island of Manhattan, we learn from the *Albany Records*, was so called after the ancient name of the tribe of savages among whom the Dutch first settled themselves, but the appellation did not extend to the province.

[2] Dirk Wesselse Ten Broeck, the first of the name mentioned in the records, was known in public life as Dirk Wessels. He was the first acting Recorder under the charter of Albany, mayor 1696–97, and for many years a leading man in the colony. He died in 1717. His grandson, Dirk Ten Broeck, was mayor 1746–47, Abraham, a son of the last, was mayor 1779–83, and again 1796–98, and a general

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the Beekmans, who have all of them been since distinguished in the late civil wars, either as persecuted loyalists or triumphant patriots. I do not precisely recollect the motives assigned for the voluntary exile of persons who were evidently in circumstances that might admit of their living in comfort at home, but am apt to think that the early settlers were those who adhered to the interest of the stadtholder's family, a party which, during the minority of King William, was almost persecuted by the high republicans. They who came over at a later period probably belonged to the party which opposed the stadtholder, and which was then in its turn depressed. These persons afterwards distinguished themselves by an aversion, almost amounting to antipathy, to the British army, and indeed to all the British colonists. Their notions were mean and contracted; their manners blunt and austere; and their habits sordid and parsimonious; as the settlement began to extend they retired, and formed new establishments, afterwards called Fishkill, Esopus, etc.

To the Schuylers, Cuylers, DeLanceys, Van Cortlandts, and a few others, this description did by no means apply. Yet they too bore about them the tokens of former affluence and respectability, such as family plate, portraits of their ancestors executed in a superior style, and great numbers of original paint-

of brigade in the Revolutionary War. His wife was Elizabeth, the only daughter of the sixth patroon of Rensselaerwyck, and aunt of the last, Patroon Stephen Van Rensselaer.

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ings, some of which were much admired by acknowledged judges. Of these the subjects were generally taken from sacred history.

I do not recollect the exact time, but think it was during the last years of Charles the Second, that a settlement we then possessed at Surinam was exchanged for the extensive (indeed at that time boundless) province of Munhattoes,[1] which, in compliment to the then heir apparent, was called New York. Of the part of that country then explored, the most fertile and beautiful was situated far inland, on the banks of the Hudson river. This copious and majestic stream is navigable one hundred and seventy miles from its mouth for vessels of sixty or seventy tons burden.[2] Near the head of it, as a kind of barrier against the natives, and a central resort for traders, the foundation was laid of a town called

[1] Surinam was awarded to the Dutch at the peace of Westminster, after various reverses, while New York, for which it was exchanged, remained quietly in the hands of the English. The two nations however continued for more than a century to make Guiana a point of attack in time of war.

[2] The tonnage of the ancient sloops has been somewhat increased. The sloop in which Capt. Stewart Dean sailed from Albany to China in 1785, was 80 tons. The government made improvements in the navigation of the river after Albany became a port of entry, so that schooners of 200 tons were enabled to reach the city, and the Rochester steam boat, the largest vessel licensed at this port in 1836, of nearly 500 tons, made trips at low water. At a later day the Isaac Newton of 1400 tons was put on the river, and renewed efforts to increase the upward flow of the tide, in 1866, added nearly two feet to the surface. The altitude of Albany being but six or eight feet above that of New York, there are at all times three tides in the river, so great is the distance they have to ascend before reaching their utmost limit.

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Oranienburgh,[1] and afterwards, by the British, Albany.

After the necessary precaution of erecting a small stockaded fort for security, a church was built in the centre of the intended town, which served in different respects as a kind of land-mark. A gentleman of the name of Van Rensselaer was considered as in a manner lord paramount of this city, a pre-eminence which his successor still enjoys, both with regard to the town and the lands adjacent. The original proprietor having obtained from the high and mighty states a grant of lands, which, beginning at the church, was twenty-four by forty-eight miles in size, forming a magnificent manor, including lands not only of the best quality of any in the province, but the most happily situated both for the purpose of commerce and agriculture. This great proprietor was looked up to as much as republicans in a new country could be supposed to look up to any one. He was called the patroon, a designation tantamount to lord of the manor. Yet in the distribution of these lands, the sturdy Belgian spirit of independence set limits to the power and profits of this lord of the forests, as he might then be called. None of these lands were either sold or alienated. The more wealthy settlers, as the

[1] It does not appear what name the Dutch may have given the locality. It was often alluded to as the Fuyck. Oranje is Dutch, but Fort Orange is English. I have not seen it elsewhere called Oranienburgh, although that would be a proper name — the city or fortress of Orange.

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Schuylers,[1] Cuylers, etc., took very extensive leases of the fertile plains along the river, with boundless liberty of woods and pasturage, to the westward. The terms were, that the lease should hold while water runs and grass grows, and the landlord to receive the tenth sheaf of every kind of grain the ground produces. Thus ever accommodating the rent to the fertility of the soil, and changes of the seasons, you may suppose the tenants did not greatly fear a landlord, who could neither remove them, nor heighten their rents. Thus, without the pride of property, they had all the independence of proprietors. They were like German princes, who, after furnishing their contingent to the emperor, might make war on him when they chose. Besides the profits (yearly augmenting) which the patroon drew from his ample possessions, he held in his own hands an extensive and fruitful demesne. Yet preserving in a great measure the simple and frugal habits of his ancestors, his wealth was not an object of envy, nor a source of corruption to his fellow-citizens. To the northward of these bounds, and at the southern extremity also, the Schuylers and Cuylers held lands of their own. But the only other great landholders I remember, holding their land by those original tenures, were Phillips

[1] Philip (Pietersen) Schuyler bought his farm of several hundred acres and a large island about four miles north of Albany at a cost of 8,000 florins; and in recognition of the patroon's right he gave 40 bushels of wheat yearly.



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and Cortlandt; their lands lay also on the Hudson's river, half way down to New York, and were denominated Phillip's and Cortlandt's manors.[1] At the time of the first settling of the country the Indians were numerous and powerful all along the river; but they consisted of wandering families, who, though they affixed some sort of local boundaries for distinguishing the hunting grounds of each tribe, could not be said to inhabit any place. The cool and crafty Dutch governors, being unable to cope with them in arms, purchased from them the most valuable tracts for some petty consideration. They affected great friendship for them; and, while conscious of their own weakness, were careful not to provoke hostilities; and they, silently and insensibly, established themselves to the west.

[1] Philipse, or Philipsen, a carpenter by trade, who founded a wealthy Dutch family. In 1674 a valuation of the estates of the principal inhabitants of New York was made, when that of Frederick Philipsen, the highest, was valued at 80,000 florins. A portion of this manor was sequestered by reason of the defection of the owner in the Revolution, who fled to England, and was allowed by that government about three hundred thousand dollars as compensation for his loss. The whole of the original property was at a later day estimated at over three millions of dollars. The Van Cortlandt manor is still in a measure intact, and known as such.

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# Chapter II

## THE FIVE NATIONS — JOHN AND PHILIP SCHUYLER

ON the Mohawk river, about forty miles distant from Albany, there subsisted a confederacy of Indian tribes, of a very different character from those mentioned in the preceding chapter; too sagacious to be deceived, and too powerful to be eradicated. These were the once renowned Five Nations, whom any one, who remembers them while they were a people, will hesitate to call savages. Were *they* savages who had fixed habitations; who cultivated rich fields; who built castles (for so they called their not incommodious wooden houses, surrounded with palisadoes); who planted maize and beans, and showed considerable ingenuity in constructing and adorning their canoes, arms, and clothing? They who had wise though unwritten laws, and conducted their wars, treaties, and alliances with deep and sound policy; they whose eloquence was bold, nervous, and animated; whose language was sonorous, musical, and expressive; who possessed generous and elevated sentiments, heroic fortitude, and unstained probity: were these indeed savages? The difference

> "Of scent the headlong lioness between
> And hound sagacious, on the tainted green,"

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is not greater than that of the Mohawks in point of civility and capacity, from other American tribes, among whom, indeed, existed a far greater diversity of character, language, etc., than Europeans seem to be aware of. This little tribute to the memory of a people who have been, while it soothes the pensive recollections of the writer, is not so foreign to the subject as it may at first appear. So much of the peace and safety of this infant community depended on the friendship and alliance of these generous tribes, and to conciliate and retain their affections so much address was necessary, that common characters were unequal to the task. Minds liberal and upright, like those I am about to describe, could alone excite that esteem, and preserve that confidence, which were essential towards retaining the friendship of those valuable allies.

From the time of the great rebellion, so many English refugees frequented Holland, that the language and manners of our country became familiar at the Hague, particularly among the stadtholder's party. When the province of New York fell under the British dominion, it became necessary that everybody should learn our language, as all public business was carried on in the English tongue, which they did the more willingly, as, after the revolution, the accession of the stadtholder to the English crown very much reconciled them to our government; still, however, the English was a kind of court language, little spoken, and imperfectly

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THE AUNT SCHUYLER HOUSE AT THE FLATS, ERECTED IN 1666

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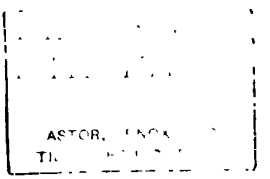
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understood in the interior. Those who brought with them the French and English languages soon acquired a sway over their less enlightened fellow settlers. Of this number were the Schuylers and Cuylers, two families among whom intellect of the superior kind seemed an inheritance, and whose intelligence and liberality of mind, fortified by well-grounded principle, carried them far beyond the petty and narrow views of the rest. Habituated at home to centre all wisdom and all happiness in commercial advantages, they would have been very ill calculated to lay the foundation of an infant state in a country that afforded plenty and content, as the reward of industry, but where the very nature of the territory, as well as the state of society, precluded great pecuniary acquisitions. Their object here was taming savage nature, and making the boundless wild subservient to agricultural purposes. Commercial pursuits were a distant prospect; and before they became of consequence, rural habits had greatly changed the character of these republicans. But the commercial spirit, inherent in all true Batavians, only slept to wake again, when the avidity of gain was called forth by the temptation of bartering for any lucrative commodity. The furs of the Indians gave this occasion, and were too soon made the object of the avidity of petty traders. To the infant settlement at Albany the consequences of this short-sighted policy might have proved fatal, had not these patriotic leaders, by their example

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and influence, checked for a while such illiberal and dangerous practices. It is a fact singular and worth attending to, from the lesson it exhibits, that in all our distant colonies there is no other instance where a considerable town and prosperous settlement has arisen and flourished, in peace and safety, in the midst of nations disposed and often provoked to hostility: at a distance from the protection of ships, and from the only fortified city, which, always weakly garrisoned, was little fitted to awe and protect the whole province. Let it be remembered that the distance from New York to Albany is 160 miles; and that in the intermediate space, at the period of which I speak, there was not one town or fortified place. The shadow of a palisadoed fort[1] which then existed in Albany, was occupied by a single independent company, who did duty, but were dispersed through the town, working at various trades; so scarce indeed were artizans in this community, that a tradesman might in these days ask any wages he chose.

To return to this settlement, which evidently owed its security to the wisdom of its leaders, who always acted on the simple maxim that honesty is the best policy; several miles north from Albany a considerable possession, called the Flats, was inhabited by

[1] It may be worth noting that Captain Massey, who commanded this noneffective company for many years, was the father of Mrs. Lenox, an inestimable character, well known for her literary productions, and for being the friend and protégée of Doctor Johnson. — *Mrs. Grant.*

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Colonel Philip Schuyler,[1] one of the most enlightened men in the province. This being a frontier, he would have found it a very dangerous situation had he not been a person of singular worth, fortitude, and wisdom. Were I not afraid of tiring my reader with a detail of occurrences which, taking place before the birth of my friend, might seem irrelevant to the present purpose, I could relate many instances almost incredible, of the power of mind displayed by this gentleman in governing the uninstructed without coercion or legal right. He possessed this species of power in no common degree; his influence, with that of his brother John Schuyler,[2] was exerted to conciliate the wandering tribes of Indians; and by fair traffic, for he too was a trader, and by fair liberal dealing, they attained their object. They also strengthened the league already formed with the five Mohawk nations, by procuring for them some assistance against their enemies, the Onondagoes of the lakes.[3]

[1] Col. Philip Schuyler, the husband of the American Lady, died about four years before Mrs. Grant, then a young girl, became acquainted with her. She doubtless heard the name Philip repeated often, and that of Col. Peter Schuyler who had died more than thirty years before, comparatively seldom. Philip had become fixed in her memory, and she sometimes uses it erroneously instead of Peter, as in this instance. It is clear from what follows agreeing with historical facts, that Col. Peter Schuyler is meant.

[2] John Schuyler was the youngest son of Philip Schuyler, the ancestor of one branch of the Schuyler family. He was the father of the American Lady, and the grandfather of General Philip Schuyler of the Revolution.

[3] The Iroquois, or Five Nations, consisted of the Mohawks,

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Queen Anne had by this time succeeded to the stadtholder. The gigantic ambition of Louis the Fourteenth actuated the remotest parts of his extensive dominions; and the encroaching spirit of this restless nation began to discover itself in hostilities to the infant colony. A motive for which could scarce be discovered, possessing as they did already much more territory than they were able to occupy, the limits of which were undefined.[1] But the province of New York was a frontier; and, as such, a kind of barrier to the southern colonies. It began also to compete for a share of the fur trade, then very considerable, before the beavers were driven back from their original haunts. In short, the province daily rose in importance; and being in a great measure protected by the Mohawk tribes, the policy of courting their alliance, and impressing their minds with an exalted idea of the power and grandeur of the British empire, became obvious. I

Oneidas, Onondagas, Cayugas, and Senecas. It was probably the Hurons that Mrs. Grant had in mind as the antagonists of the New York Indians.

[1] The boundaries of farms and tracts were quite indefinite, and as they became cultivated all traces of the described bounds utterly ceased to be distinguishable. For instance, a farm now in the heart of the city of Albany, leased by the patroon to Isaac Casparse (that was Isaac the son of Caspar Halenbeck), is thus described in the lease: bounded on the north by the plain and the hill, on the east by the swamp, on the south by the Bever kil, and on the west by the woods. Nothing now remains but the creek to mark the boundaries of this tract, and that is arched over and used as a sewer. The hill was long since leveled, the swamp filled in and built upon, and the woods cleared up, and the area occupied by streets and a dense population.

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cannot recollect the name of the governor at this time; but whoever he was, he, as well as the succeeding ones, visited the settlement at Albany, to observe its wise regulations, and growing prosperity, and to learn maxims of sound policy from those whose interests and happiness were daily promoted by the practice of it.

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# Chapter III

## COLONEL SCHUYLER AND FIVE SACHEMS VISIT ENGLAND — THEIR RECEPTION AND RETURN

IT was thought advisable to bring over some of the heads of the tribes to England to attach them to that country: but to persuade the chiefs of a free and happy people, who were intelligent, sagacious, and aware of all probable dangers; who were strangers to all the maritime concerns, and had never beheld the ocean; to persuade such independent and high-minded warriors to forsake the safety and enjoyments of their own country, to encounter the perils of a long voyage, and trust themselves among entire strangers, and this merely to bind closer an alliance with the sovereign of a distant country — a female sovereign too; a mode of government that must have appeared to them very incongruous; this was no common undertaking, nor was it easy to induce these chiefs to accede to the proposal. The principal motive for urging it was to counteract the machinations of the French, whose emissaries in these wild regions had even then begun to style us, in effect, a nation of shop-keepers; and to impress the tribes dwelling in their boundaries with vast ideas of the power and

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splendor of their *grand monarque*, while our sovereign, they said, ruled over a petty island, and was himself a trader. To counterwork those suggestions, it was thought requisite to give the leaders of the nation an adequate idea of our power, and the magnificence of our court. The chiefs at length consented, on this only condition, that their brother Philip,[1] who never told a lie, or spoke without thinking, should accompany them. However this gentleman's wisdom and integrity might qualify him for this employment, it by no means suited his placid temper, simple manners, and habits of life, at

[1] This event happening nearly half a century before Mrs. Grant was born, and nearly a century before this work was written, "unassisted by written memorials," the mistake of the name of Philip for Pieter is pardonable. It was Pieter, however, the eldest son of Philip, who figured in this episode. He was the first mayor of Albany in 1686, and twenty-four years later, in 1710, conducted these natives to England, arriving there in the time of Queen Anne and the *Spectator*. On this occasion his full length portrait was painted, and is still preserved among his descendants at the Flats, an engraving of which is here given, and some pleasant allusions are made to the event in the *Spectator* of that time.

Portrait of Col. Pieter Schuyler, painted in England, 1710.

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once pastoral and patriarchal, to travel over seas, visit courts, and mingle in the bustle of a world, the customs of which were become foreign to those primitive inhabitants of new and remote regions. The adventure, however, succeeded beyond his expectation; the chiefs were pleased with the attention paid them, and with the mild and gracious manners of the queen, who at different times admitted them to her presence. With the good Philip she had many conversations, and made him some valuable presents, among which, I think, was her picture; but this with many others was lost, in a manner which will appear hereafter. Colonel Schuyler too was much delighted with the courteous affability of this princess; she offered to knight him, which he respectfully, but positively refused: and being pressed to assign his reasons, he said he had brothers and near relations in humble circumstances, who, already his inferiors in property, would seem as it were depressed by his elevation: and though it should have no such effect on his mind, it might be the means of awakening pride or vanity in the female part of his family. He returned, however, in triumph, having completely succeeded in his mission. The kings, as they were called in England, came back in full health, deeply impressed with esteem and attachment for a country which to them appeared the centre of arts, intelligence and wisdom; where they were treated with kindness and respect; and neither made the objects of perpetual exhibition,

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nor hurried about to be continually distracted with a succession of splendid, and to them incomprehensible sights, the quick shifting of which rather tends to harass minds which have enough of native strength to reflect on what they see, without knowledge sufficient to comprehend it. It is to this childish and injudicious mode of treating those uncivilized beings, this mode of rather extorting from them a tribute to our vanity, than taking the necessary pains to inform and improve them, that the ill success of all such experiments since have been owing. Instead of endeavoring to conciliate them by genuine kindness, and by gradually and gently unfolding to them simple and useful truths, our manner of treating them seems calculated to dazzle, oppress and degrade them with a display of our superior luxuries and refinements: which, by the elevated and selfdenied Mohawk, would be regarded as unmanly and frivolous objects, and which the voluptuous and low-minded Otaheitean would so far relish, that the privation would seem intolerable, when he returned to his hogs and his cocoas. Except such as have been previously inoculated (a precaution which voyagers have rarely had the prudence or humanity to take), there is scarcely an instance of savages brought to Europe that have not died of the small-pox; induced either by the infection to which they are exposed from the indiscriminate crowds drawn about them or the alteration in their blood, which unusual diet, liquors,

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close air, and heated rooms, must necessarily produce.

The presents made to these adventurous warriors were judiciously adapted to their taste and customs. They consisted of showy habits, of which all these people are very fond, and arms made purposely in the form of those used in their own country. It was the fortune of the writer of these memoirs, more than thirty years after, to see that great warrior and faithful ally of the British crown the redoubted King Hendrick, then sovereign of the Five Nations, splendidly arrayed in a suit of light blue, made in an antique mode, and trimmed with broad silver lace; which was probably an heir-loom, in the family, presented to his father by his good ally, and sister, the female king of England.[1]

King Hendrick.

[1] King Hendrick, born 1680, killed 1755 at the battle of Lake George, as is well known, was not sovereign of the Five Nations, but was a chief of the Mohawk nation, who had been invested with the title of king, an unusual term for a leader among the Indians. Possibly it was another warrior similarly accoutered that Mrs. Grant saw at a later day; for although King Hendrick returned with such a costume, and his portrait was painted in it in England during his visit, he had been a short time dead when Mrs. Grant arrived in the country.

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I cannot exactly say how long Colonel Schuyler and his companions staid in England, but think they were nearly a year absent.[1] In those primeval days of the settlement, when our present rapid modes of transmitting intelligence were unknown, in a country so detached and inland as that at Albany, the return of these interesting travellers was like the first lighting of lamps in a city.

[1] These sachems or chiefs were all of the Mohawk nation, representing all of the Five Nations. They sailed for England in December, 1709, and had their first audience of Queen Anne on the 19th of the following April. On their stormy passage across the Atlantic one of them died, whence Mrs. Grant speaks of them as four in number. They left England on board a man-of-war, May 8, and arrived in Boston, Mass., July 15, 1710.

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# Chapter IV

## COLONEL SCHUYLER AND THE SACHEMS — LITERARY ACQUISITIONS — MANNERS OF THE SETTLERS

THIS sagacious and intelligent patriot thus brought to the foot of the British throne, the high spirited rulers of the boundless wild, who, alike heedless of the power and splendor of distant monarchs, were accustomed to say, with Fingal, "sufficient for me is the desart, with all deer and woods." It may easily be supposed that such a mind as Philip's was equally fitted to acquire and communicate intelligence. He who had conversed with Addison, Marlborough, and Godolphin, who had gratified the curiosity of Oxford and Bolingbroke, of Arbuthnot and of Gay, with accounts of nature in her pristine garb, and of her children in their primitive simplicity; he who could do all this, no doubt received ample returns of various information from those best qualified to give it, and was besides a diligent observer. Here he improved a taste for literature, native to him, for it had not yet taken root in this uncultivated soil. He brought home the Spectator and the tragedy of Cato, Windsor Forest, Young's poem on the Last Day, and in short all the works then published of that constel-

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lation of wits which distinguished the last female reign. Nay more, and better, he brought Paradise Lost; which in after-times afforded such delight to some branches of his family, that to them

"Paradise, indeed, seemed opened in the wild."

But to return to our sachems, from whom we have too long digressed: when they arrived at Albany, they did not, as might be expected, hasten home to communicate their discoveries, or display their acquisitions. They summoned a congress there, not only of the elders of their own nation, but the chiefs of all those with whom they were in alliance. This solemn meeting was held in the Dutch church. In the present depressed and diminished state of these once powerful tribes, so few traces of their wonted energy remain, that it could scarce be credited, were I able to relate with what bold and flowing eloquence they clothed their conceptions; powerful reasoning, emphatic language, and graceful action, added force to their arguments, while they persuaded their adherents to renounce all connection with the tribes under the French influence; and form a lasting league, offensive and defensive, with that great queen whose mild majesty had so deeply impressed them: and the mighty people whose kindness had gratified, and whose power had astonished them, whose populous cities swarmed with arts and commerce, and in whose floating castles they had rode safely over the ocean.



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I have seen a volume of the speeches of these Mohawks preserved by Colonel Schuyler; they were literally translated, so that the native idiom was preserved; which instead of appearing uncouth, seemed to add to their strength and sublimity.

When Colonel Schuyler returned from England, about the year 1709, his niece Catalina,[1] the subject of this narrative, was about seven years old; he had a daughter and sons, yet this child was early distinguished above the rest for docility, a great desire of knowledge, and an even and pleasing temper; this her uncle early observed. It was at that time very difficult to procure the means of instruction in those inland districts; female education of consequence was conducted on a very limited scale; girls learnt needlework (in which they were indeed both skilful and ingenious) from their mothers and aunts; they were taught too at that period to read, in Dutch, the Bible and a few Calvinist tracts of the

[1] Catalina was the youngest daughter of Capt. Johannes Schuyler, born March 5, 1704. Capt. Johannes was the youngest son of Philip Pietersen, and is noted for having led a successful expedition into Canada in 1690, at the age of 22. He was mayor of Albany 1703–6, and died July 27, 1747. His house on State Street, corner of South Pearl, built 1667, when recently taken down, was the oldest house in Albany. Catalyntje, as she was called, married Cornelis Cuyler, who was for a long time alderman of the second ward, and was mayor in 1742, to 1746, instead of Cornelis Schuyler, as is mentioned in some of the printed tables of the mayors. She was the younger sister of Madame Schuyler, the heroine of this work, who was Margaretta, born January 12, 1701. Papers bearing her signature are in existence, in which she signed her name *Margrita*, and tradition corroborates her identity as the daughter of Johannes Schuyler.

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devotional kind. But in the infancy of the settlement few girls read English; when they did, they were thought accomplished; they generally spoke it, however, imperfectly, and few were taught writing. This confined education precluded elegance; yet, though there was no polish, there was no vulgarity. The dregs of the people, who subside to the bottom of the mass, are not only degraded by abject poverty, but so utterly shut out from intercourse with the more enlightened, and so rankled with envy at feeling themselves so, that a sense of their condition gradually debases their minds; and this degradation communicates to their manners, the vulgarity of which we complain. This more particularly applies to the lower class in towns, for mere simplicity, or even a rustic bluntness, I would by no means call vulgarity. At the same time these unembellished females had more comprehension of mind, more variety of ideas, more in short of what may be called original thinking, than could easily be imagined. Their thoughts were not like those of other illiterate women, occupied by the ordinary details of the day, and the gossiping tattle of the neighborhood. The life of new settlers, in a situation like this, where the very foundations of society were to be laid, was a life of exigencies. Every individual took an interest in the general welfare, and contributed their respective shares of intelligence and sagacity to aid plans that embraced important objects relative to the common good.

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Every day called forth some new expedient, in which the comfort or advantage of the whole was implicated; for there were no degrees but those assigned to worth and intellect. This singular community seemed to have a common stock, not only of sufferings and enjoyments, but of information and ideas; some pre-eminence, in point of knowledge and abilities, there certainly was, yet those who possessed it seemed scarcely conscious of their superiority; the daily occasions which called forth the exertions of mind, sharpened sagacity, and strengthened character; avarice and vanity were there confined to very narrow limits; of money there was little; and dress was, though in some instances valuable, very plain, and not subject to the caprice of fashion. The wolves, the bears, and the enraged or intoxicated savages, that always hung threatening on their boundaries, made them more and more endeared to each other. In this calm infancy of society, the rigors of law slept, because the fury of turbulent passions, had not awakened it. Fashion, that capricious tyrant over adult communities, had not erected her standard; that standard to which the looks, the language, the very opinions of her subjects must be adjusted. Yet no person appeared uncouth, or ill bred, because there was no accomplished standard of comparison. They viewed no superior with fear or envy; and treated no inferior with contempt or cruelty; servility and insolence were thus equally unknown; perhaps

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A VIEW OF THE LATE PROTESTANT DUTCH CHURCH in the CITY of ALBANY.

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they were less solicitous either to please or to shine than the members of more polished societies; because, in the first place they had no motive either to dazzle or deceive; and in the next, had they attempted it, they felt there was no assuming a character with success, where their native one was so well known. Their manners, if not elegant and polished, were at least easy and independent: the constant efforts necessary to extend their commercial and agricultural possessions prevented indolence; and industry was the certain path to plenty. Surrounded on all sides by those whom the least instance of fraud, insolence, or grasping meanness, would have rendered irreconcilable enemies, they were at first obliged to "assume a virtue if they had it not;" and every circumstance that renders virtue habitual, may be accounted a happy one. I may be told that the virtues I describe were chiefly those of situation. I acknowledge it. It is no more to be expected that this equality, simplicity, and moderation, should continue in a more advanced state of society, than that the sublime tranquillity, and dewy freshness, which adds a nameless charm to the face of nature, in the dawn of a summer's morning, should continue all day. Before increased wealth and extended territory these "wassel days" quickly receded; yet it is pleasing to indulge the remembrance of a spot, where peace and felicity, the result of a moral excellence, dwelt undisturbed, for, alas! hardly for a century.

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# Chapter V

## STATE OF RELIGION AMONG THE SETTLERS— SKETCH OF THE STATE OF SOCIETY AT NEW YORK

I MUST finish this general outline, by saying something of that religion which gave stability and effect to the virtues of this infant society. Their religion, then, like their original national character, had in it little of fervor or enthusiasm: their manner of performing religious duties was regular and decent, but calm, and to more ardent imaginations might appear mechanical. None ever doubted of the great truths of revelation, yet few seemed to dwell on the result with that lively delight which devotion produces in minds of keener sensibility. If their piety, however, was without enthusiasm, it was also without bigotry; they wished others to think as they did, without showing rancor or contempt towards those who did not. In many individuals, whose lives seemed governed by the principles of religion, the spirit of devotion seemed to be quiescent in the heart, and to break forth in exigencies; yet that monster in nature, an impious woman, was never heard of among them.

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Indeed it was on the females that the task of religious instruction generally devolved; and in all cases where the heart is interested, whoever teaches, at the same time learns.

Before I quit this subject, I must observe a singular coincidence; not only the training of children but of plants, such as needed peculiar care or skill to rear them, was the female province. Every one in town or country had a garden; but all the more hardy plants grew in the field, in rows, amidst the hills, as they were called, of Indian corn. These lofty plants sheltered them from the sun, while the same hoeing served for both; there cabbages, potatoes, and other esculent roots, with variety of gourds grew to a great size, and were of an excellent quality. Kidney-beans, asparagus, celery, great variety of salads and sweet herbs, cucumbers, etc., were only admitted into the garden, into which no foot of man intruded after it was dug in spring. Here were no trees, those grew in the orchard in high perfection; strawberries and many high flavored wild fruits of the shrub kind abounded so much in the woods, that they did not think of cultivating them in their gardens, which were extremely neat but small, and not by any means calculated for walking in. I think I yet see what I have so often beheld both in town and country, a respectable mistress of a family going out to her garden, in an April morning, with her great calash, her little painted basket of seeds, and her rake over her shoulder,

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to her garden labors. These were by no means figurative,

"From morn till noon, from noon till dewy eve."

A woman in very easy circumstances, and abundantly gentle in form and manners, would sow, and plant, and rake incessantly. These fair gardeners too were great florists: their emulation and solicitude in this pleasing employment, did indeed produce "flowers worthy of Paradise." These, though not set in "curious knots," were ranged in beds, the varieties of each kind by themselves; this, if not varied and elegant, was at least rich and gay. To the Schuylers this description did not apply; they had gardeners, and their gardens were laid out in the European manner.

Perhaps I should reserve my description of the manner of living in that country for that period, when, by the exertions of a few humane and enlightened individuals, it assumed a more regular and determinate form. Yet as the same outline was preserved through all the stages of its progression, I know not but that it may be the best to sketch it entirely, before I go further; that the few and simple facts which my narrative affords may not be clogged by explanations relative to the customs, or any other peculiarities which can only be understood by a previous acquaintance with the nature of the country, its political relations, and the manners of the people: my recollection all this while has been

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merely confined to Albany and its precincts. At New York there was always a governor, a few troops, and a kind of a little court kept; there too was a mixed, and in some degree, polished society. To this the accession of many families of French hugonots,[1] rather above the middling rank, contributed not a little: those conscientious exiles had more knowledge and piety than any other class of the inhabitants; their religion seemed indeed endeared to them by what they had suffered for adhering to it. Their number and wealth was such, as enabled them to build not only a street, but a very respectable church in the new city. In this place of worship service continued to be celebrated in the French language within my recollection, though the original congregation was by that time much blended in the mass of general society. It was the custom of the inhabitants of the upper settlement, who had any pretensions to superior culture or polish, among which number Col. Schuyler stood foremost, to go once in a year to New York, where all the law-courts were held, and all the important business of the province transacted, here too they sent their children occasionally to reside with their relations, and to learn the more polished manners and language of the capital. The inhabitants of that city, on the

[1] Properly so written perhaps, because derived from Hugon, or Hugo, a heretic or conspirator, a term finally given to the French protestants of the sixteenth century, and now come to be written Huguenots.

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other hand, delighted in a summer excursion to Albany. The beautiful and in some places highly singular banks of the river, rendering a voyage to its source both amusing and interesting, while the primitive manners of the inhabitants diverted the gay and idle, and pleased the thoughtful and speculative.

Let me now be indulged in drawing a picture of the abode of my childhood just as, at this time, it presents itself to my mind.

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# Chapter VI

## DESCRIPTION OF ALBANY —MANNER OF LIVING THERE

THE city of Albany was stretched along the banks of the Hudson; one very wide and long street lay parallel to the river, the intermediate space between it and the shore being occupied by gardens. A small but steep hill rose above the centre of the town, on which stood a fort, intended (but very ill adapted) for the defense of the place, and of the neighboring country. From the foot of this hill, another street was built, sloping pretty rapidly down till it joined the one before mentioned that ran along the river. This street was still wider than the other; it was only paved on each side, the middle being occupied by public edifices. These consisted of a market place, a guard house, a town hall, and the English and Dutch churches. The English church, belonging to the episcopal persuasion, and in the diocese of the bishop of London, stood at the foot of the hill, at the upper end of the street. The Dutch church was situated at the bottom of the descent where the street terminated; two irregular streets, not so broad, but equally long, ran parallel to those, and a few even ones opened between them.

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The town, in proportion to its population, occupied a great space of ground. This city, in short, was a kind of semi-rural establishment; every house had its garden, well, and a little green behind; before every door a tree was planted, rendered interesting by being coeval with some beloved member of the family; many of their trees were of a prodigious size and extraordinary beauty, but without regularity, every one planting the kind that best pleased him, or which he thought would afford the most agreeable shade to the open portico at his door which was surrounded by seats, and ascended by a few steps. It was in these that each domestic group was seated in summer evenings to enjoy the balmy twilight, or serenely clear moonlight. Each family had a cow, fed in a common pasture at the end of the town. In the evening they returned all together, of their own accord, with their tinkling bells hung at their necks, along the wide and grassy street, to their wonted sheltering trees, to be milked at their master's doors. Nothing could be more pleasing to a simple and benevolent mind than to see thus, at one view, all the inhabitants of a town, which contained not one very rich or very poor, very knowing or very ignorant, very rude or very polished individual; to see all these children of nature enjoying in easy indolence, or social intercourse,

"The cool, the fragrant, and the *dusky* hour,"

clothed in the plainest habits, and with minds as undisguised and artless. These primitive beings

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were dispersed in porches grouped according to similarity of years and inclinations. At one door young matrons, at another the elders of the people, at a third the youths and maidens, gaily chatting or singing together, while the children played round the trees, or waited by the cows, for the chief ingredient of their frugal supper, which they generally ate sitting on the steps in the open air. This picture, so familiar to my imagination, has led me away from my purpose, which was to describe the rural economy, and modes of living in this patriarchal city. At one end of the town, as I observed before, was a common pasture where all the cattle belonging to the inhabitants grazed together. A never-failing instinct guided each home to her master's door in the evening, there being treated with a few vegetables and a little salt, which is indispensably necessary for cattle in this country, they patiently waited the night; and after being milked in the morning, they went off in slow and regular procession to their pasture. At the other end of the town was a fertile plain along the river, three miles in length, and near a mile broad. This was all divided into lots, where every inhabitant raised Indian corn sufficient for the food of two or three slaves (the greatest number that each family ever possessed), and for his horses, pigs, and poultry: their flour and other grain they purchased from farmers in the vicinity. Above the town, a long stretch to the westward was occupied first by sandy hills, on which

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grew bilberries of uncommon size and flavor in prodigious quantities; beyond rise heights of a poor hungry soil, thinly covered with stunted pines, or dwarf oak. Yet in this comparatively barren tract, there were several wild and picturesque spots, where small brooks, running in deep and rich bottoms, nourished on their banks every vegetable beauty; there some of the most industrious early settlers had cleared the luxuriant wood from these charming little glens, and built neat cottages for their slaves, surrounded with little gardens and orchards, sheltered from every blast, wildly picturesque, and richly productive. Those small sequestered vales had an attraction that I know not how to describe, and which probably resulted from the air of deep repose that reigned there, and the strong contrast which they exhibited to the surrounding sterility. One of these was in my time inhabited by a hermit. He was a Frenchman, and did not seem to inspire much veneration among the Albanians. They imagined, or had heard, that he retired to that solitude in remorse for some fatal duel in which he had been engaged; and considered him as an idolator because he had an image of the virgin in his hut. I think he retired to Canada at last; but I remember being ready to worship him for the sanctity with which my imagination invested him, and being cruelly disappointed because I was not permitted to visit him. These cottages were in summer occupied by some of the negroes who cultivated the grounds

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about them, and served as a place of joyful liberty to the children of the family on holidays, and a nursery for the young negroes whom it was the custom to rear very tenderly, and instruct very carefully.

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# Chapter VII

## GENTLE TREATMENT OF SLAVES AMONG THE ALBANIANS — REFLECTIONS ON SERVITUDE

IN the society I am describing, even the dark aspect of slavery was softened into a smile. And I must, in justice to the best possible masters, say, that a great deal of that tranquillity and comfort, to call it by no higher name, which distinguished this society from all others, was owing to the relation between master and servant being better understood here than in any other place. Let me not be detested as an advocate for slavery when I say that I think I have never seen people so happy in servitude as the domestics of the Albanians. One reason was (for I do not now speak of the virtues of their masters), that each family had few of them, and that there were no field negroes. They would remind one of Abraham's servants, who were all born in the house, which was exactly their case. They were baptized too, and shared the same religious instruction with the children of the family; and, for the first years, there was little or no difference with regard to food or clothing between their children and those of their masters.

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When a negro-woman's child attained the age of three years, the first new year's day after, it was solemnly presented to a son or daughter, or other young relative of the family, who was of the same sex with the child so presented. The child to whom the young negro was given immediately presented it with some piece of money and a pair of shoes; and from that day the strongest attachment subsisted between the domestic and the destined owner. I have no where met with instances of friendship more tender and generous than that which here subsisted between the slaves and their masters and mistresses. Extraordinary proofs of them have been often given in the course of hunting or Indian trading, when a young man and his slave have gone to the trackless woods together, in the case of fits of the ague, loss of a canoe, and other casualties happening near hostile Indians. The slave has been known, at the imminent risk of his life, to carry his disabled master through trackless woods with labor and fidelity scarce credible; and the master has been equally tender on similar occasions of the humble friend who stuck closer than a brother; who was baptized with the same baptism, nurtured under the same roof, and often rocked in the same cradle with himself. These gifts of domestics to the younger members of the family, were not irrevocable: yet they were very rarely withdrawn. If the kitchen family did not increase in proportion to that of the master, young children were purchased



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from some family where they abounded, to furnish those attached servants to the rising progeny. They were never sold without consulting their mother, who, if expert and sagacious, had a great deal to say in the family, and would not allow her child to go into any family with whose domestics she was not acquainted. These negro-women piqued themselves on teaching their children to be excellent servants, well knowing servitude to be their lot for life, and that it could only be sweetened by making themselves particularly useful, and excelling in their department. If they did their work well, it is astonishing, when I recollect it, what liberty of speech was allowed to those active and prudent mothers. They would chide, reprove, and expostulate in a manner that we would not endure from our hired servants; and sometimes exert fully as much authority over the children of the family as the parents, conscious that they were entirely in their power. They did not crush freedom of speech and opinion in those by whom they knew they were beloved, and who watched with incessant care over their interest and comfort. Affectionate and faithful as these home-bred servants were in general, there were some instances (but very few) of those who, through levity of mind, or a love of liquor or finery, betrayed their trust, or habitually neglected their duty. In these cases, after every means had been used to reform them, no severe punishments were inflicted at home. But the terrible sentence, which they

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dreaded worse than death, was passed — they were sold to Jamaica. The necessity of doing this was bewailed by the whole family as a most dreadful calamity, and the culprit was carefully watched on his way to New York, lest he should evade the sentence by self-destruction.

One must have lived among those placid and humane people to be sensible that servitude, hopeless, endless servitude, could exist with so little servility and fear on the one side, and so little harshness or even sternness of authority on the other. In Europe, the footing on which service is placed in consequence of the corruptions of society, hardens the heart, destroys confidence, and embitters life. The deceit and venality of servants, not absolutely dishonest, puts it out of one's power to love or trust them. And if, in hopes of having people attached to us, who will neither betray our confidence, nor corrupt our children, we are at pains to rear them from childhood, and give them a religious and moral education; after all our labor, others of their own class seduce them away to those who can afford to pay higher for their services. This is not the case in a few remote districts. Where surrounding mountains seem to exclude the contagion of the world, some traces of fidelity and affection among domestics still remain. But it must be remarked, that, in those very districts, it is usual to treat inferiors with courtesy and kindness, and to consider

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those domestics who marry out of the family as holding a kind of relation to it, and still claiming protection. In short, the corruption of that class of people is, doubtless, to be attributed to the example of their superiors. But how severely are those superiors punished? Why this general indifference about home; why are the household gods, why is the sacred hearth so wantonly abandoned? Alas! the charm of home is destroyed, since our children, educated in distant seminaries, are strangers in the paternal mansion; and our servants, like mere machines, move on their mercenary track without feeling or exciting one kind or generous sentiment. Home, thus despoiled of all its charms, is no longer the scene of any enjoyment but such as wealth can purchase. At the same time we feel there a nameless cold privation, and conscious that money can coin the same enjoyments with more variety elsewhere, we substitute these futile and evanescent pleasures for that perennial spring of calm satisfaction, "without o'er flowing full," which is fed by the exercise of the kindly affections, and soon indeed must those stagnate where there are not proper objects to excite them. I have been forced into this painful digression by unavoidable comparisons. To return:

Amidst all this mild and really tender indulgence to their negroes, these colonists had not the smallest scruple of conscience with regard to the right by

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which they held them in subjection. Had that been the case, their singular humanity would have been incompatible with continued injustice. But the truth is, that of law the generality of those people knew little; and of philosophy, nothing at all. They sought their code of morality in the Bible, and there imagined they found this hapless race condemned to perpetual slavery; and thought nothing remained for them but to lighten the chains of their fellow Christians, after having made them such. This I neither "extenuate," nor "set down in malice," but merely record the fact. At the same time it is but justice to record also a singular instance of moral delicacy distinguishing this settlement from every other in the like circumstances: though from their simple and kindly modes of life, they were from infancy in habits of familiarity with these humble friends, yet being early taught that nature had placed between them a barrier, which it was in a high degree criminal and disgraceful to pass, they considered a mixture of such distinct races with abhorrence, as a violation of her laws. This greatly conduced to the preservation of family happiness and concord. An ambiguous race, which the law does not acknowledge; and who (if they have any moral sense, must be as much ashamed of their parents as these last are of them), are certainly a dangerous, because degraded part of the community. How much more so must be those unfortu-

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nate beings who stand in the predicament of the bat in the fable, whom both birds and beasts disowned? I am sorry to say that the progress of the British army, when it arrived, might be traced by a spurious and ambiguous race of this kind. But of a mulatto born before their arrival I only remember a single instance; and from the regret and wonder it occasioned, considered it as singular. Colonel Schuyler, of whom I am to speak, had a relation so weak and defective in capacity, that he never was intrusted with anything of his own, and lived an idle bachelor about the family. In process of time a favorite negro-woman, to the great offence and scandal of the family, bore a child to him, whose color gave testimony to the relation. The boy was carefully educated; and when he grew up, a farm was allotted to him well stocked and fertile, but in "depth of woods embraced," about two miles back from the family seat. A destitute white woman, who had somehow wandered from the older colonies, was induced to marry him; and all the branches of the family thought it incumbent on them now and then to pay a quiet visit to Chalk (for so, for some unknown reason, they always called him). I have been in Chalk's house myself, and a most comfortable abode it was; but considered him as a mysterious and anomalous being.

I have dwelt the longer on this singular instance of slavery existing devoid of its attendant horrors,

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because the fidelity and affection resulting from a bond of union so early formed between master and servant, contributed so very much to the safety of individuals, as well as the general comfort of society, as will hereafter appear.

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# Chapter VIII

## EDUCATION AND EARLY HABITS OF THE ALBANIANS

THE foundations both of friendship and still tenderer attachments were here laid very early by an institution which I always thought had been peculiar to Albany, till I found in Dr. Moore's View of Society on the Continent an account of a similar custom subsisting in Geneva. The children of the town were all divided into companies, as they called them, from five to six years of age, till they became marriageable. How those companies first originated, or what were their exact regulations, I cannot say; though I, belonging to none, occasionally mixed with several, yet always as a stranger, though I spoke their current language fluently. Every company contained as many boys as girls. But I do not know that there was any limited number; only this I recollect, that a boy and a girl of each company, who were older, cleverer, or had some other preëminence above the rest, were called heads of the company, and as such, obeyed by the others. Whether they were voted in, or attained their preëminence by a tacit acknowledgment of their superiority, I know not, but however it was

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attained it was never disputed. The company of little children had also their heads. All the children of the same age were not in one company; there were at least three or four of equal ages, who had a strong rivalry with each other; and children of different ages in the same family, belonged to different companies. Wherever there is human nature there will be a degree of emulation, strife, and a desire to lessen others, that we may exalt ourselves. Dispassionate as my friends comparatively were, and bred up in the highest attainable candor and innocence, they regarded the company most in competition with their own with a degree of jealous animosity. Each company, at a certain time of the year, went in a body to gather a particular kind of berries, to the hills. It was a sort of annual festival, attended with religious punctuality. Every company had an uniform for this purpose; that is to say, very pretty light baskets made by the Indians, with lids and handles, which hung over the arm, and were adorned with various colors. One company would never allow the least degree of taste to the other in this instance; and was sure to vent its whole stock of spleen in decrying the rival baskets. Nor would they ever admit that the rival company gathered near so much fruit on these excursions as they did. The parents of these children seemed very much to encourage this manner of marshalling and dividing themselves. Every child was permitted to entertain the whole company

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on its birth-day, and once besides, during winter and spring. The master and mistress of the family always were bound to go from home on these occasions, while some old domestic was left to attend and watch over them, with an ample provision of tea, chocolate, preserved and dried fruits, nuts, and cakes of various kinds, to which was added cider or a syllabub, for these young friends met at four, and did not part till nine or ten, and amused themselves with the utmost gaiety and freedom in any way their fancy dictated. I speak from hearsay; for no person that does not belong to the company is ever admitted to these meetings: other children or young people visit occasionally and are civilly treated, but they admit of no intimacies beyond their company. The consequence of these exclusive and early intimacies was, that, grown up, it was reckoned a sort of apostasy to marry out of one's company. And indeed it did not often happen. The girls, from the example of their mothers, rather than any compulsion, became very early notable and industrious, being constantly employed in knitting stockings, and making clothes for the family and slaves; they even made all the boys' clothes. This was the more necessary, as all articles of clothing were extremely dear. Though all the necessaries of life, and some luxuries abounded, money, as yet, was a scarce commodity. This industry was the more to be admired, as children were here indulged to a degree that, in our vitiated state

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of society, would have rendered them good for nothing. But there, where ambition, vanity, and the more turbulent passions were scarce awakened; where pride, founded on birth, or any external preëminence, was hardly known; and where the affections flourished fair and vigorous, unchecked by the thorns and thistles with which our minds are cursed in a more advanced state of refinement, affection restrained parents from keeping their children at a distance, and inflicting harsh punishments. But then they did not treat them like apes or parrots; by teaching them to talk with borrowed words and ideas, and afterwards gratifying their own vanity by exhibiting these premature wonders to company, or repeating their sayings. They were tenderly cherished, and early taught that they owed all their enjoyments to the divine source of beneficence, to whom they were finally accountable for their actions; for the rest they were very much left to nature, and permitted to range about at full liberty in their earliest years, covered in summer with some slight and cheap garb, which merely kept the sun from them, and in the winter with some warm habit, in which convenience only was consulted. Their dress of ceremony was never put on but when their *company* was assembled. They were extremely fond of their children; but luckily for the latter, never dreamed of being vain of their immature wit and parts, which accounts, in some measure for the great scarcity of coxcombs among them. The chil-

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dren returned the fondness of their parents with such tender affection, that they feared giving them pain as much as ours do punishment, and very rarely wounded their feelings by neglect, or rude answers. Yet the boys were often wilful and giddy at a certain age, the girls being sooner tamed and domesticated.

These youths were apt, whenever they could carry a gun (which they did at a very early period), to follow some favorite negro to the woods, and, while he was employed in felling trees, range the whole day in search of game, to the neglect of all intellectual improvement, and contract a love of savage liberty which might, and in some instances did, degenerate into licentious and idle habits. Indeed, there were three stated periods in the year when, for a few days, young and old, masters and slaves, were abandoned to unruly enjoyment, and neglected every serious occupation for pursuits of this nature.

We who occupy countries fully inhabited can form no idea of the multitude of birds and animals that nature provides to consume her waste fertility in those regions unexplored by man. In the interior of the province the winter is much colder than might be supposed, from the latitude in which it lies, which is only 43 degrees 36 minutes, from the keen north winds which blow constantly for four or five months over vast frozen lakes and snowy tracts, in the direction of Canada. The

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snow too lies very deep; but when once they are visited by the south wind in March, its literally warm approach dissolves the snow like magic; and one never sees another wintry day till the season of cold returns. These southern winds seem to flow in a rapid current, uninterrupted by mountains or other obstacles, from the burning sands of the Floridas, Georgia, and the Carolinas, and bring with them a degree of warmth, that appears no more the natural result of the situation, than the intense cold of winter does in that season.

Along the sea banks, in all these southern provinces, are low sandy lands, that never were or will be inhabited, covered with the berry-bearing myrtle, from which wax is extracted fit for candles. Behind these banks are woods and unwholesome swamps of great extent. The myrtle groves formerly mentioned afford shelter and food to countless multitudes of pigeons in winter, when their fruit is in season; while wild geese and ducks, in numbers nearly as great, pass the winter in the impenetrable swamps behind. Some time in the month of April, a general emigration takes place to the northward, first of the geese and ducks, and then of the pigeons; they keep the direction of the sea coast till they come to the mouths of the great rivers, and then follow their course till they reach the great lakes in the interior, where nature has provided for them with the

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same liberality as in their winter haunts. On the banks of these lakes there are large tracts of ground covered with a plant taller and more luxuriant than the wild carrot, but something resembling it, on the seeds of which the pigeons feed all the summer, while they are breeding and rearing their young. When they pass in spring, which they always do in the same track, they go in great numbers, and are very fat. Their progression northward and southward begins always about the vernal and autumnal equinoxes; and it is this that renders the carnage so great when they pass over inhabited districts.[1] They begin to fly in the dawn, and are never seen after nine or ten o'clock in the morning, possibly feeding and resting in the woods all the rest of the day. If the morning be dry and windy, all the fowlers (that is every body) are disappointed, for then they fly so high that no shot can reach them: but in a cloudy morning the carnage is incredible; and it is singular that their removal falls out at the times of the year that the weather (even in this serene climate) is generally cloudy. This

[1] The immense flocks of pigeons that formerly came down from the north after the season of incubation in such numbers as sometimes to darken the atmosphere like a passing cloud, have long since ceased to be witnessed in the valleys of the Hudson and the Connecticut. Geese and ducks also appear in diminished numbers, and are more frequently heard making their passage by night, and are not so often seen in the unbroken form of their flight, which is that of a harrow, or the letter A.

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migration, as it passed by, occasioned, as I said before, a total relaxation from all employments, and a kind of drunken gaiety, though it was rather slaughter than sport; and, for above a fortnight, pigeons in pies and soups, and every way they could be dressed, were the food of the inhabitants. These were immediately succeeded by wild geese and ducks, which concluded the carnival for that season, to be renewed in September. About six weeks after the passage of these birds, sturgeon of a large size, and in great quantity, made their appearance in the river. Now the same ardor seemed to pervade all ages in pursuit of this new object. Every family had a canoe; and on this occasion all were launched; and these persevering fishers traced the course of the sturgeon up the river, followed them by torch light, and often continued two nights upon the water, never returning till they had loaded their canoes with this valuable fish, and many other very excellent in their kinds, that come up the river at the same time. The sturgeon not only furnished them with good part of their food in the summer months, but was pickled or dried for future use or exportation.

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# Chapter IX

## FIRST ADVENTURES OF THE INDIAN TRADERS

TO return to the boys, as all young men were called here till they married. Thus early trained to a love of sylvan sports, their characters were unfolded by contingencies. In this infant society penal laws lay dormant, and every species of coercion was unknown.

Morals, founded on Christianity, were fostered by the sweet influence of the charities of life. The reverence which children in particular had for their parents, and the young in general for the old, was the chief bond that held society together. This veneration being founded on esteem, certainly could only have existed thus powerfully in an uncorrupted community. It had, however, an auxiliary no less powerful.

Here, indeed, it might with truth be said,

"Love breath'd his infant sighs from anguish free."

In consequence of this singular mode of associating together little exclusive parties of children of both sexes, which has been already mentioned, endearing intimacies, formed in the age of playful

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innocence, were the precursors of more tender attachments.

These were not wrought up to romantic enthusiasm, or extravagant passion, by an inflamed imagination, or by the fears of rivalry, or the artifices of coquetry, yet they had power sufficient to soften the manners and elevate the character of the lover.

I know not if this be the proper place to observe, how much of the general order of society, and the happiness of a people depends on marriage being early and universal among them; but of this more hereafter. The desire (undiverted by any other passion) of obtaining the object of their affection, was to them a stimulus to early and severe exertion. The enamored youth did not listlessly fold his arms and sigh over his hopeless or unfortunate passion. Of love not fed by hope they had not an idea. Their attachments originated at too early an age, and in a circle too familiar to give room for those first-sight impressions of which we hear such wonders. If the temper of the youth was rash and impetuous, and his fair one gentle and complying, they frequently formed a rash and precipitate union without consulting their relations, when perhaps the elder of the two was not above seventeen. This was very quietly borne by the parties aggrieved. The relations of both parties met, and with great calmness consulted on what was to be done. The father of the youth or the damsel, which ever it was who had most wealth,



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or fewest children, brought home the young couple: and the new married man immediately set about a trading adventure, which was renewed every season, till he had the means of providing a home of his own. Meantime the increase of the younger family did not seem an inconvenience, but rather a source of delight to the old people; and an arrangement begun from necessity was often continued through choice for many years after. Their tempers, unruffled by the endless jealousies and competitions incident to our mode of life, were singularly placid, and the love of offspring, where children were truly an unmixed blessing, was a common sentiment which united all the branches of the family and predominated over every other. The jarring and distrust, the petulance and *egotism*, which, distinct from all weightier considerations, would not fail to poison concord, were different families to dwell under one roof here, were there scarcely known. It is but justice to our acquired delicacy of sentiment to say, that the absence of refinement contributed to this tranquillity. These primitive people, if they did not gather the flowers of cultivated elegance, were not wounded by the thorns of irritable delicacy: they had neither artificial wants, nor artificial miseries. In short, they were neither too wise to be happy, nor too witty to be at rest.

Thus it was in the case of unauthorized marriages. In the more ordinary course of things, love, which

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ANCIENT PULPIT USED IN DUTCH CHURCHES OF ALBANY
FROM 1656 UNTIL 1806

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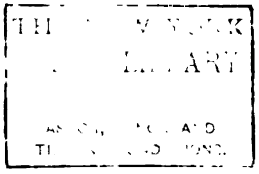


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makes labor light, tamed these young hunters, and transformed them into diligent and laborious traders, for the nature of their trade included very severe labor. When one of the *boys* was deeply smitten, his fowling-piece and fishing rod were at once relinquished. He demanded of his father forty or at most fifty dollars, a negro boy and a canoe; all of a sudden he assumed the brow of care and solicitude, and began to smoke, a precaution absolutely necessary to repel aguish damps, and troublesome insects. He arrayed himself in a habit very little differing from that of the aborigines, into whose bounds he was about to penetrate, and in short commenced Indian trader; that strange amphibious animal, who uniting the acute senses, strong instincts, and unconquerable patience and fortitude of the savage, with the art, policy, and inventions of the European, encountered, in the pursuit of gain, dangers and difficulties equal to those described in the romantic legends of chivalry.

The small bark canoe in which this hardy adventurer embarked himself, his fortune, and his faithful *squire* (who was generally born in the same house, and predestined to his service), was launched amidst the tears and prayers of his female relations, amongst whom was generally included his destined bride, who well knew herself to be the motive of this perilous adventure.

The canoe was entirely filled with coarse strouds and blankets, guns, powder, beads, etc., suited to

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the various wants and fancies of the natives; one pernicious article was never wanting, and often made a great part of the cargo. This was ardent spirits, for which the natives too early acquired a relish, and the possession of which always proved dangerous, and sometime fatal to the traders. The Mohawks bringing their furs and other peltry habitually to the stores of their wonted friends and patrons, it was not in that easy and safe direction that these trading adventures extended. The canoe generally steered northward towards the Canadian frontier. They passed by the flats and stonehook in the outset of their journey. Then commenced their toils and dangers at the famous water-fall called the Cohoes, ten miles above Albany, where three rivers,[1] uniting their streams into one, dash over a rocky shelf, and falling into a gulf below with great violence, raise clouds of mist bedecked with splendid rainbows. This was the Rubicon which they had to pass before they plunged into pathless woods, ingulphing swamps, and lakes, the opposite shores of which the eye could not reach. At the Cohoes on account of the obstruction formed by the torrent, they unloaded their canoe, and carried

[1] It is *below* the Cohoes falls that the Mohawk becomes several streams, and debouches into the Hudson at four points, after meandering about and forming numerous islands, among which the American army constructed fortifications of earth, to further impede the progress of the British army, if it should force the American lines at Stillwater. Traces of these earthworks are still distinguishable on Van Schaick's and Haver Islands.

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it above a mile further upon their shoulders, returning again for the cargo, which they were obliged to transport in the same manner. This was but a prelude to labors and dangers, incredible to those who dwell at ease. Further on, much longer carrying places frequently recurred: where they had the vessel and cargo to drag through thickets impervious to the day, abounding with snakes and wild beasts, which are always to be found on the side of the rivers.[1]

Their provision of food was necessarily small, for fear of overloading the slender and unstable conveyance already crowded with goods. A little dried beef and Indian corn meal was their whole stock, though they formerly enjoyed both plenty and variety. They were in a great measure obliged to depend upon their own skill in hunting and fishing, and the hospitality of the Indians; for hunting, indeed, they had small leisure, their time being sedulously employed in consequence of the obstacles that retarded their progress. In the slight and fragile canoes, they often had to cross great lakes, on which the wind raised a terrible surge. Afraid

[1] These ancient mynheers, with wonderful perseverance and courage, were forced in those voyages to breast the downward and devious current of the Mohawk, with its rifts, falls and portages, descend into Oneida Lake, and follow its outlet to Oswego; course along the winding shores of Ontario and Erie to Detroit; up that river to St. Clair; and along the shores of Huron, crossing Saginaw bay to Mackinac, where they traded with the Indian for his furs; then with infinite labor to retrace their route to Pearl Street, laden with riches so hardly earned as often to reduce them to early decrepitude.

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of going into the track of the French traders, who were always dangerous rivals, and often declared enemies, they durst not follow the direction of the river St. Lawrence; but, in search of distant territories and unknown tribes, were wont to deviate to the east and southwest, forcing their painful way towards the source of "rivers unknown to song," whose winding course was often interrupted with shallows and oftener still by fallen trees of great magnitude lying across, which it was requisite to cut through with their hatchets before they could proceed. Small rivers which wind through fertile valleys, in this country, are peculiarly liable to this obstruction. The chestnut and hickory grow to so large a size in this kind of soil, that in time they become top heavy, and are then the first prey to the violence of the winds; and thus falling form a kind of accidental bridge over these rivers.

When the toils and dangers of the day were over, the still greater terrors of the night commenced. In this, which might literally be styled the howling wilderness, they were forced to sleep in the open air, which was frequently loaded with the humid evaporation of swamps, ponds, and redundant vegetation. Here the axe must be again employed to procure the materials of a large fire even in the warmest weather. This precaution was necessary that the flies and musquitoes might be expelled by the smoke, and that the wolves and bears might be deterred by the flame from encroaching on their

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place of rest. But the light which afforded them protection created fresh disturbance.

> "Loud as the wolves on Orca's stormy steep,
> Howl to the roarings of the northern deep,"

the American wolves howl to the fires kindled to affright them, watching the whole night on the surrounding hills to keep up a concert which truly "rendered night hideous:" meanwhile the bull-frogs, terrible though harmless, and smaller kinds of various tones and countless numbers, seemed all night calling to each other from opposite swamps, forming the most dismal assemblage of discordant sounds. Though serpents abounded very much in the woods, few of them were noxious. The rattle-snake, the only dangerous reptile, was not so frequently met with as in the neighboring provinces, and the remedy which nature has bestowed as an antidote to his bite was very generally known. The beauties of rural and varied scenery seldom compensated the traveller for the dangers of his journey. "In the close prison of innumerous boughs," and on ground thick with underwood, there was little of landscape open to the eye. The banks of streams and lakes no doubt afforded a rich variety of trees and plants: the former of a most majestic size, the latter of singular beauty and luxuriance; but otherwise they only travelled through a grove of chestnuts or oak, to arrive at another of maple, or poplar, or a vast stretch of pines and other evergreens. If

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by chance they arrived at a hill crowned with cedars, which afforded some command of prospect, still the gloomy and interminable forest, only varied with different shades of green, met the eye which ever way it turned, while the mind, repelled by solitude so vast, and silence so profound, turned inward on itself. Nature here wore a veil rich and grand, but impenetrable: at least this was the impression it was likely to make on an European mind; but a native American, familiar from childhood with the productions and inhabitants of the woods, sought the nuts and wild fruits with which they abounded, the nimble squirrel in all its varied forms, the architect beaver, the savage racoon, and the stately elk, where we should see nothing but awful solitudes untrod by human foot. It is inconceivable how well these young travellers, taught by their Indian friends, and the experimental knowledge of their fathers, understood every soil and its productions. A boy of twelve years old would astonish you with his accurate knowledge of plants, their properties, and their relation to the soil and to each other. "Here (said he), is a wood of red oak, when it is "grubbed up this will be loam and sand, and make "good Indian corn ground. This chestnut wood "abounds with strawberries, and is the very best "soil for wheat. The poplar wood yonder is not "worth clearing; the soil is always wet and cold. "There is a hickory wood, where the soil is always "rich and deep, and does not run out; such and

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"such plants that dye blue, or orange, grow under "it."

This is merely a slight epitome of the wide views of nature that are laid open to these people from their very infancy, the acquisition of this kind of knowledge being one of their first amusements, yet those who were capable of astonishing you by the extent and variety of this local skill, in objects so varied and so complicated, never heard of a petal, corolla, or stigma in their lives, nor even of the strata of that soil with the productions and properties of which they were so intimately acquainted.

Without compass, or guide of any kind, the traders steered through these pathless forests. In those gloomy days when the sun is not visible, or in winter, when the falling snows obscured his beams, they made an incision on the bark on the different sides of a tree; that on the north was invariably thicker than the other, and covered with moss in much greater quantity. And this never failing indication of the polar influence, was to those sagacious travellers a sufficient guide. They had indeed several subordinate monitors. Knowing so well as they did the quality of the soil by the trees or plants most prevalent, they could avoid a swamp, or approach with certainty to a river or high ground if such was their wish, by means that to us would seem incomprehensible. Even the savages seldom visited these districts, except in the dead of winter;

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they had towns, as they called their summer dwellings, on the banks of the lakes and rivers in the interior, where their great fishing places were. In the winter, their grand hunting parties were in places more remote from our boundaries, where the deer and other larger animals took shelter from the neighborhood of man. These single adventurers sought the Indians in their spring haunts as soon as the rivers were open; there they had new dangers to apprehend. It is well known that among the natives of America, revenge was actually a virtue, and retaliation a positive duty: while faith was kept with these people they never became aggressors. But the Europeans, by the force of bad example, and strong liquors, seduced them from their wonted probity. Yet from the first their notion of justice and revenge was of that vague and general nature, that if they considered themselves injured, or if one of their tribe had been killed by an inhabitant of any one of our settlements, they considered any individual of our nation as a proper subject for retribution. This seldom happened among our allies; never indeed, but when the injury was obvious, and our people very culpable. But the avidity of gain often led our traders to deal with Indians, among whom the French possessed a degree of influence, which produced a smothered animosity to our nation. When at length, after conquering numberless obstacles, they arrived at the place of their destination, these daring adventurers found

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occasion for no little address, patience, and indeed courage, before they could dispose of their cargo, and return safely with the profits.

The successful trader had now laid the foundation of his fortune, and approved himself worthy of her for whose sake he encountered all these dangers. It is utterly inconceivable, how even a single season, spent in this manner, ripened the mind, and changed the whole appearance, nay the very character of the countenance of these demi-savages, for such they seem on returning from among their friends in the forests. Lofty, sedate, and collected, they seem masters of themselves, and independent of others; though sun-burnt and austere, one scarce knows them till they unbend. By this Indian likeness, I do not think them by any means degraded. One must have seen these people (the Indians I mean), to have any idea what a noble animal man is, while unsophisticated. I have been often amused with the descriptions that philosophers, in their closets, who never in their lives saw man but in his improved or degraded state, give of uncivilized people; not recollecting that they are at the same time uncorrupted. Voyagers, who have not their language, and merely see them transiently, to wonder and be wondered at, are equally strangers to the real character of man in a social, though unpolished state. It is no criterion to judge of this state of society by the roaming savages (truly such) who are met with on these inhospitable coasts where nature is nig-

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gardly of her gifts, and where the skies frown continually on her hard-fated children. For some good reason to us unknown, it is requisite that human beings should be scattered through all habitable space, "till gradual life goes out beneath the pole:" and to beings so destined, what misery would result from social tenderness and fine perceptions. Of the class of social beings (for such indeed they were) of whom I speak, let us judge from the traders who know their language and customs, and from the adopted prisoners who have spent years among them. How unequivocal, how consistent is the testimony they bear to their humanity, friendship, fortitude, fidelity, and generosity; but the indulgence of the recollections thus suggested have already led me too far from my subject.

The joy that the return of these youths occasioned was proportioned to the anxiety their perilous journey had produced. In some instances the union of the lovers immediately took place before the next career of gainful hardships commenced. But the more cautious went to New York in winter, disposed of their peltry, purchased a larger cargo, and another slave and canoe. The next year they laid out the profits of their former adventures in flour and provisions, the staple of the province; this they disposed of at the Bermuda islands, where they generally purchased one of those light sailing, cedar schooners, for building of which those islanders are famous, and proceeding to the

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leeward islands loaded it with a cargo of rum, sugar and molasses.

They were now ripened into men, and considered as active and useful members of society, possessing a stake in the common weal.

The young adventurer had generally finished this process by the time he was one, or at most, two and twenty. He now married, or if married before, which pretty often was the case, brought home his wife to a house of his own. Either he kept his schooner, and loading her with produce, sailed up and down the river all summer, and all winter disposed of the cargoes he obtained in exchange to more distant settlers; or he sold her, purchased European goods, and kept a store. Otherwise he settled in the country, and became as diligent in his agricultural pursuits as if he had never known any other.

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# Chapter X

## MARRIAGES, AMUSEMENTS, RURAL EXCURSIONS, ETC.

IT was in this manner that the young colonist made the transition from boyhood to manhood; from the disengaged and careless bachelor, to the provident and thoughtful father of a family; and thus was spent that period of life so critical in polished society to those whose condition exempts them from manual labor. Love, undiminished by any rival passion, and cherished by innocence and candor, was here fixed by the power of early habit, and strengthened by similarity of education, tastes, and attachments. Inconstancy, or even indifference among married couples was unheard of, even where there happened to be a considerable disparity in point of intellect. The extreme affection they bore their mutual offspring was a bond that for ever endeared them to each other. Marriage in this colony was always early, very often happy, and very seldom indeed interested. When a man had no son, there was nothing to be expected with a daughter, but a well brought up female slave, and the furniture of the best bed-chamber. At the death of her father she obtained another division of his effects, such as

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he thought she needed or deserved, for there was no rule in these cases.

Such was the manner in which those colonists began life: nor must it be thought that those were mean or uninformed persons. Patriots, magistrates, generals, those who were afterwards wealthy, powerful and distinguished, all, except a few elder brothers, occupied by their possessions at home, set out in the same manner; and in after life, even in the most prosperous circumstances, they delighted to recount the "humble toils and destiny obscure" of their early years.

The very idea of being ashamed of anything that was neither vicious nor indecent never entered an Albanian head. Early accustomed to this noble simplicity, this dignified candor, I cannot express the contempt and disgust I felt at the shame of honorable poverty, the extreme desire of concealing our real condition, and appearing what we are not, that peculiarly characterizes, I had almost said disgraces, the northern part more particularly of this island. I have often wondered how this vile sentiment, that undermines all true greatness of mind, should prevail more here than in England, where wealth, beyond a doubt, is more respected, at least preponderates more over birth, and heart, and mind, and many other valuable considerations. As a people we certainly are not sordid, why then should we descend to the meanness of being ashamed of our condition, while we have not done anything to

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degrade ourselves? Why add a sting to poverty, and a plume to vanity, by the poor transparent artifice that conceals nothing, and only changes pity into scorn?

Before I quit the subject of Albanian manners, I must describe their amusements, and some other peculiarities in their modes of life. When I say their amusements, I mean those in which they differed from most other people. Such as they had in common with others require no description. They were exceedingly social, and visited each other very frequently, beside the regular assembling together in porches every fine evening. Of the more substantial luxuries of the table they knew little, and of the formal and ceremonious parts of good breeding still less.

If you went to spend a day anywhere, you were received in a manner we should think very cold. No one rose to welcome you; no one wondered you had not come sooner, or apologized for any deficiency in your entertainment. Dinner, which was very early, was served exactly in the same manner as if there were only the family. The house indeed was so exquisitely neat and well regulated, that you could not surprise them; and they saw each other so often and so easily, that intimates made no difference. Of strangers they were shy: not by any means from want of hospitality, but from a consciousness that people who had little to value themselves on but their knowledge of the modes and

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ceremonies of polished life, disliked their sincerity, and despised their simplicity. If you showed no insolent wonder, but easily and quietly adopted their manners, you would receive from them not only very great civility, but much essential kindness. Whoever has not common sense and common gratitude enough to pay this tribute of accommodation to those among whom he is destined for the time to live, must of course be an insulated, discontented being; and come home railing at the people whose social comforts he disdained to partake. After sharing this plain and unceremonious dinner, which might, by the bye, chance to be a very good one, but was invariably that which was meant for the family, tea was served in at a very early hour. And here it was that the distinction shown to strangers commenced. Tea here was a perfect regale; accompanied by various sort of cakes unknown to us, cold pastry, and great quantities of sweetmeats and preserved fruits of various kinds, and plates of hickory and other nuts ready cracked. In all manner of confectionery and pastry these people excelled; and having fruit in great abundance, which costs them nothing, and getting sugar home at an easy rate, in return for their exports to the West Indies, the quantity of these articles used in families, otherwise plain and frugal, was astonishing. Tea was never unaccompanied with some of these petty articles; but for strangers a great display was made. If you staid



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supper, you were sure of a most substantial though plain one. In this meal they departed, out of compliment to the strangers, from their usual simplicity. Having dined between twelve and one you were quite prepared for it. You had either game or poultry roasted, and always shell-fish in the season: you had also fruit in abundance. All this with much neatness, but no form. The seeming coldness with which you were first received, wore off by degrees. They could not accommodate their topics to you, and scarcely attempted it. But the conversation of the old, though limited in regard to subjects, was rational and easy, and had in it an air of originality and truth not without its attractions. That of the young was natural and playful yet full of localities, which lessened its interest to a stranger, but which were extremely amusing when you became one of the initiated.

Their amusements were marked by a simplicity which, to strangers, appeared rude and childish (I mean those of the younger class). In spring, eight or ten of the young people of one company, or related to each other, young men and maidens, would set out together in a canoe on a kind of rural excursion, of which amusement was the object. Yet so fixed were their habits of industry, that they never failed to carry their work-baskets with them, not as a form, but as an ingredient necessarily mixed with their pleasures. They had no attendants; and steered a devious course of

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four, five, or perhaps more miles, till they arrived at some of the beautiful islands with which this fine river abounded, or at some sequestered spot on its banks, where delicious wild fruits, or particular conveniences for fishing, afforded some attraction. There they generally arrived by nine or ten o'clock, having set out in the cool and early hour of sunrise. Often they met another party going, perhaps, to a different place, and joined them, or induced them to take their route. A basket with tea, sugar, and the other usual provisions for breakfast, with the apparatus for cooking it; a little rum and fruit for making cool weak punch, the usual beverage in the middle of the day, and now and then some cold pastry, was the sole provision; for the great affair was to depend on the sole exertions of the *boys*, in procuring fish, wild ducks, etc., for their dinner. They were all, like Indians, ready and dexterous with the axe, gun, etc. Whenever they arrived at their destination they sought out a dry and beautiful spot opposite to the river, and in an instant with their axes cleared so much superfluous shade or shrubbery as left a semicircular opening, above which they bent and twined the boughs, so as to form a pleasant bower, while the girls gathered dried branches, to which one of the youths soon set fire with gun powder, and the breakfast, a very regular and cheerful one, occupied an hour or two; the young men

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then set out to fish, or perhaps shoot birds, and the maidens sat busily down to their work, singing and conversing with all the ease and gaiety the bright serenity of the atmosphere and beauty of the surrounding scene were calculated to inspire. After the sultry hours had been thus employed, the *boys* brought their tribute from the river or the wood, and found a rural meal prepared by their fair companions, among whom were generally their sisters and the chosen of their hearts. After dinner they all set out together to gather wild strawberries, or whatever other fruit was in season; for it was accounted a reflection to come home empty handed. When wearied of this amusement, they either drank tea in their bower, or, returning, landed at some friend's on the way, to partake of that refreshment. Here, indeed,

> "Youth's free spirit, innocently gay,
> Enjoyed the most that innocence could give."

Another of their summer amusements was going to the bush, which was thus managed: a party of young people set out in little open carriages, something in the form of a gig, of which every family had one; every one carried something with him, as in these cases there was no hunting to add provision. One brought wine for negus, another tea and coffee of a superior quality, a third a pigeon pie; in short, every one brought something, no matter how trifling, for there was no

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emulation about the extent of the contribution. In this same bush, there were spots to which the poorer members of the community retired, to work their way with patient industry, through much privation and hardship, compared to the plenty and comfort enjoyed by the rest. They perhaps could only afford to have one negro woman, whose children as they grew up, became to their master a source of plenty and ease; but in the meantime the good man wrought hard himself, with a little occasional aid sent him by his friends. He had plenty of the necessaries of life, but no luxuries. His wife and daughter milked the cows and wrought at the hay, and his house was on a smaller scale than the older settlers had theirs, yet he had always one neatly furnished room, a very clean house, with a pleasant portico before it, generally a fine stream beside his dwelling, and some Indian wigwams near it. He was wood-surrounded, and seemed absolutely to live in the bosom of nature, screened from all the artificial ills of life; and those spots cleared of incumbrances, yet rich in native luxuriance, had a wild originality about them not easily described. The young parties, or sometimes elder ones, who set out on this woodland excursion, had no fixed destination, they went generally in the forenoon, and when they were tired of going on the ordinary road, turned into the *bush*, and whenever they saw an inhabited spot, with the appearance of which

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they were pleased, went in with all the ease of intimacy, and told them they were come to spend the afternoon there. The good people, not in the least surprised at this incursion, very calmly opened the reserved apartments, or if it were very hot, received them in the portico. The guests produced their stores, and they boiled their tea-kettle, and provided cream, nuts, or any peculiar dainty of the woods which they chanced to have; and they always furnished bread and butter, which they had excellent of their kinds. They were invited to share the collation, which they did with great ease and frankness; then dancing, or any other amusement that struck their fancy, succeeded. They sauntered about the bounds in the evening, and returned by moonlight. These good people felt not the least embarrassed at the rustic plainness of everything about them; they considered themselves as on the way, after a little longer exertion of patient industry, to have every thing that the others had; and their guests thought it an agreeable variety in this abrupt manner to visit their sequestered abodes.

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# Chapter XI

## WINTER AMUSEMENTS, ETC.

IN winter, the river, frozen to a great depth, formed the principal road through the country, and was the scene of all those amusements of skating and sledge races, common to the north of Europe. They used in great parties to visit their friends at a distance, and having an excellent and hardy breed of horses, flew from place to place over the snow or ice in these sledges with incredible rapidity, stopping a little while at every house they came to, and always well received, whether acquainted with the owners or not. The night never impeded these travellers, for the atmosphere was so pure and serene, and the snow so reflected the moon and starlight, that the nights exceeded the days in beauty.

In town all the *boys* were extravagantly fond of a diversion that to us would appear a very odd and childish one. The great street of the town, in the midst of which, as has been formerly mentioned, stood all the churches and public buildings, sloped down from the hill on which the fort stood, towards the river; between the buildings was an unpaved carriage road, the foot-path beside the houses being

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the only part of the street which was paved. In winter this sloping descent, continued for more than a quarter of a mile, acquired firmness from the frost, and became extremely slippery. Then the amusement commenced. Every boy and youth in town, from eight to eighteen, had a little low sledge, made with a rope like a bridle to the front, by which it could be dragged after one by the hand. On this one or two at most could sit, and this sloping descent being made as smooth as a looking glass, by sliders' sledges, etc., perhaps a hundred at once set out in succession from the top of this street, each seated in his little sledge with the rope in his hand, which, drawn to the right or left, served to guide him. He pushed it off with a little stick, as one would launch a boat; and then, with the most astonishing velocity, precipitated by the weight of the owner, the little machine glided past, and was at the lower end of the street in an instant. What could be so delightful in this rapid and smooth descent I could never discover; though in a more retired place, and on a smaller scale, I have tried the amusement; but to a young Albanian, sleighing as he called it, was one of the first joys of life, though attended by the drawback of walking to the top of the declivity dragging his sledge every time he renewed his flight, for such it might well be called. In the managing this little machine some dexterity was necessary; an unskillful Phæton was sure to fall. The conveyance was so low, that a fall was

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attended with little danger, yet with much disgrace, for an universal laugh from all sides assailed the fallen charioteer. This laugh was from a very full chorus, for the constant and rapid succession of this procession, where every one had a brother, lover, or kinsman, brought all the young people in town to the porticos, where they used to sit wrapt in furs till ten or eleven at night, engrossed by this delectable spectacle. What magical attraction it could possibly have, I never could find out; but I have known an Albanian, after residing some years in Britain, and becoming a polished fine gentleman, join the sport, and slide down with the rest. Perhaps, after all our laborious refinements in amusement, being easily pleased is one of the great secrets of happiness, as far as it is attainable in this "frail and feverish being."

Now there remains another amusement to be described, which I mention with reluctance, and should scarce venture to mention at all had I not found a precedent for it among the virtuous Spartans. Had Lycurgus himself been the founder of their community, the young men could scarce have stolen with more alacrity and dexterity. I could never conjecture how the custom could possibly originate among a set of people of such perfect and plain integrity. But thus it was. The young men now and then spent a convivial evening at a tavern together, where, from the extreme cheapness of liquor, their bills (even when they committed an occasional

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excess) were very moderate. Either to lessen the expense of the supper, or from the pure love of what they styled frolic (Anglicè mischief), they never failed to steal either a roasting pig or a fat turkey for this festive occasion. The town was the scene of these depredations, which never extended beyond it. Swine and turkeys were reared in great numbers by all the inhabitants. For those they brought to town in winter, they had an appropriate place at the lower end of the garden, in which they were locked up. It is observable, that these animals were the only things locked up about the house, for this good reason, that nothing else ran the least risk of being stolen. The dexterity of the theft consisting in climbing over very high walls, watching to steal in when the negroes went down to feed the horse or cow, or making a clandestine entrance at some window or aperture; breaking up doors was quite out of rule, and rarely ever resorted to. These exploits were always performed in the darkest nights; if the owner heard a noise in his stables, he usually ran down with a cudgel, and laid it without mercy on any culprit he could overtake. This was either dexterously avoided or patiently borne. To plunder a man, and afterwards offer him any personal injury, was accounted scandalous; but the turkeys or pigs were never recovered. In some instances a whole band of these young plunderers would traverse the town, and carry off such a prey as would afford provision for many jovial nights. Nothing was

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more common than to find one's brothers or nephews amongst these pillagers.

Marriage was followed by two dreadful privations: a married man could not fly down the street in a little sledge, or join a party of pig stealers, without outraging decorum. If any of their confederates married, as they frequently did, very young, and were in circumstances to begin housekeeping, they were sure of an early visit of this nature from their old confederates. It was thought a great act of gallantry to overtake and chastise the robbers. I recollect an instance of one young married man, who had not long attained to that dignity, whose turkeys screaming violently one night, he ran down to chastise the aggressors; he overtook them in the fact: but finding they were his old associates, could not resist the force of habit, joined the rest in another exploit of the same nature, and then shared his own turkey at the tavern. There were two inns in the town, the masters of which were "honorable men;" yet these pigs and turkeys were always received and dressed without questioning whence they came. In one instance, a young party had in this manner provided a pig, and ordered it to be roasted at the King's Arms; another party attacked the same place whence this booty was taken, but found it already rifled. This party was headed by an idle mischievous young man, who was the Ned Poins of his fraternity; well guessing how the stolen roasting pig was disposed

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of, he ordered his friends to adjourn to the rival tavern, and went himself to the King's Arms.[1] Inquiring in the kitchen (where a pig was roasting) who supped there, he soon arrived at certainty: then taking an opportunity when there was no one in the kitchen but the cook-maid, he sent for one of the jovial party, who were at cards up stairs. During her absence, he cut the string by which the pig was suspended, laid it in the dripping pan, and through the quiet and dark streets of that sober city, carried it safely to the other tavern: where, after finishing the roasting, he and his companions prepared to regale themselves. Meantime the pig was missed at the King's Arms; and it was immediately concluded, from the dexterity and address with which this trick was performed, that no other but the Poins aforesaid could be the author of it. A new stratagem was now devised to outwit this stealer of the stolen. An adventurous youth of the despoiled party laid down a parcel of shavings opposite to the other tavern, and setting them in a blaze, cried fire! a most alarming sound here, where such accidents were too frequent. Every one rushed out of the house, where supper had been just served. The dexterous purveyor, who had occasioned all this disturbance, stole in, snatched up the dish with

[1] This tavern was on the north-west corner of Green and Beaver Streets, the sign of which bore the effigy of King George. One of the early outbursts of patriotism in the Revolution spent its fury in wresting this obnoxious emblem of royalty from its hangings, and it was burnt in State Street.

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the pig in it, stole out again by the back door, and feasted his companions with the recovered spoils.

These were a few idle young men, the sons of avaricious fathers, who, grudging to advance the means of pushing them forward by the help of their own industry to independence, allowed them to remain so long unoccupied, that their time was wasted, and habits of conviviality at length degenerated in those of dissipation. These were not only pitied and endured, but received with a degree of kindness and indulgence that was wonderful. They were usually a kind of wags, went about like privileged persons, at whose jests no one took offence; and were in their discourse and style of humor, so much like Shakespeare's clowns, that on reading that admirable author, I thought I recognized my old acquaintances. Of these, however, I saw little, the society admitted at my friend's being very select.

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# Chapter XII

## LAY-BROTHERS — MISS SCHUYLER — DETACHED INDIANS

BEFORE I quit this attempt to delineate the members of which this community was composed, I must mention a class of aged persons, who, united by the same recollections, pursuits, and topics, associated very much with each other, and very little with a world which they seemed to have renounced. They might be styled lay-brothers, and were usually widowers, or persons, who, in consequence of some early disappointment, had remained unmarried. These were not devotees who had, as was formerly often the case in Catholic countries, run from the extreme of licentiousness to that of bigotry. They were generally persons who were never marked as being irreligious or immoral; and just as little distinguished for peculiar strictness, or devotional fervor. These good men lived in the house of some relation, where they had their own apartments to themselves; and only occasionally mixed with the family. The people of the town lived to a great age; ninety was frequently attained; and I have seen different individuals of both sexes who had reached an hundred. These ancients

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seemed to place all their delight in pious books and devotional exercises particularly in singing psalms, which they would do in their own apartments for hours together. They came out and in like ghosts, and were treated in the same manner; for they never spoke unless when addressed, and seemed very careless of the things of this world, like people who had got above it. Yet they were much together, and seemed to enjoy each other's conversation. Retrospection on the scenes of early life, anticipation of that futurity so closely veiled from our sight, and discussions regarding different passages of holy writ seemed their favorite themes. They were mild and benevolent, but abstracted, and unlike other people. Their happiness, for happy I am convinced they were, was of a nature peculiar to themselves, not obvious to others. Others there were not deficient in their attention to religious duties, who living in the bosom of their families, took an active and cheerful concern to the last in all that amused or interested them; and I never understood that the lay-brothers, as I have chosen to call them, blamed them for so doing. One of the first Christian virtues, charity, in the most obvious and common sense of the word, had little scope. Here a beggar was unheard of. People, such as I have described in the *bush*, or going there, were no more considered as objects of pity, than we consider an apprentice as such for having to serve his time before he sets up for himself. In such

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cases, the wealthier, because older settlers, frequently gave a heifer or colt each to a new beginner, who set about clearing land in their vicinity. Orphans were never neglected; and from their early marriages, and the casualties their manner of life subjected them to, these were not unfrequent. You never entered a house without meeting children. Maidens, bachelors, and childless married people, all adopted orphans, and all treated them as if they were their own.

Having given a sketch, that appears to my recollection (aided by subsequent conversations with my fellow travellers) a faithful one, of the country and its inhabitants, it is time to return to the history of the mind of Miss Schuyler, for by no other circumstances than prematurity of intellect, and superior culture, were her earliest years distinguished. Her father,[1] dying early, left her very much to the tuition of his brother.[2] Her uncle's frontier situation made him a kind of barrier to the settlement; while the powerful influence, that his knowledge of nature and of character, his sound judgment and unstained integrity, had obtained over both parties, made him the bond by which the aborigines were united with the colonists. Thus, little leisure was

[1] The author's memory was at fault. The father of Miss Schuyler survived his brother, Col. Peter S., twenty-three years.

[2] Col. Peter Schuyler, Member of the King's Council. His niece sometimes accompanied him to the capitol (New York) to visit among her friends and relatives, who were quite numerous in that city. The voyage from Albany frequently occupied several days.

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left him for domestic enjoyments, or literary pursuits, for both of which his mind was peculiarly adapted. Of the leisure time he could command, however, he made the best use; and soon distinguishing Catalina[1] as the one amongst his family to whom nature had been most liberal, he was at the pains to cultivate her taste for reading, which soon discovered itself by procuring for her the best authors in history, divinity, and belles-lettres; in this latter branch her reading was not very extensive; but then the few books of this kind that she possessed were very well chosen; and she was early and intimately familiar with them. What I remember of her, assisted by comparisons since made with others, has led me to think that extensive reading, superficial and indiscriminate, such as the very easy access to books among us encourages, is not at an early period of life favorable to solid thinking, true taste, or fixed principle. Whatever she knew, she knew to the bottom; and the reflections, which were thus suggested to her strong discerning mind, were digested by means of easy and instructive conversation. Colonel Schuyler had many relations in New York; and the governor and other ruling characters there carefully cultivated the acquaintance of a person so well qualified to instruct and inform them on certain points as he was. Having considerable dealings in the fur trade too, he went every winter to the capital for a short time,

[1] Margaretta.



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to adjust his commercial concerns, and often took his favorite niece along with him, who, being of an uncommon quick growth and tall stature, soon attracted attention by her personal graces, as well as by the charms of her conversation. I have been told, and should conclude from a picture I have seen drawn when she was fifteen, that she was in her youth very handsome. Of this few traces remained when I knew her: excessive corpulence having then overloaded her majestic person, and entirely changed the aspect of a countenance once eminently graceful. In no place did female excellence of any kind more amply receive its due tribute of applause and admiration than here, for various reasons: First, cultivation and refinement were rare. Then, as it was not the common routine that women should necessarily have such and such accomplishments, pains were only taken on minds strong enough to bear improvements without becoming conceited or pedantic. And lastly, as the spur of emulation was not invidiously applied, those who acquired a superior degree of knowledge considered themselves as very fortunate in having a new source of enjoyment opened to them. But never having been made to understand that the chief motive of excelling was to dazzle or outshine others, they no more thought of despising their less fortunate companions, than of assuming preëminence for discovering a wild plum-tree or bee-hive in the woods, though, as in the former

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case, they would have regarded such a discovery as a benefit and a pleasure; their acquisitions, therefore, were never shaded by affectation. The women were all natives of the country, and few had more than domestic education. But men, who possessed the advantages of early culture and usage of the world, daily arrived on the continent from different parts of Europe. So that if we may be indulged in the inelegant liberty of talking commercially of female elegance, the supply was not equal to the demand. It may be easily supposed that Miss Schuyler met with due attention; who, even at this early age, was respected for the strength of her character, and the dignity and composure of her manners. Her mother,[1] whom she delighted to recollect, was mild, pious and amiable; her acknowledged worth was chastened by the utmost diffidence. Yet accustomed to exercise a certain power over the minds of the natives, she had great influence in restraining their irregularities, and swaying their opinions. From her knowledge of their language, and habit of conversing with them, some detached Indian families resided for a while in summer in the vicinity of houses occupied by the more wealthy and benevolent inhabitants. They generally built a slight wigwam under shelter of the orchard fence on the

[1] Her mother was the only daughter of Dr. Abraham Staats, an early immigrant, and sister of Dr. Samuel Staats, member of the King's Council.

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shadiest side; and never were neighbors more harmless, peaceable and obliging; I might truly add, industrious: for in one way or other they were constantly occupied. The women and their children employed themselves in many ingenious handicrafts, which, since the introduction of European arts and manufactures, have greatly declined. Baking trays, wooden dishes, ladles and spoons, shovels and rakes, brooms of a peculiar manufacture, made by splitting a birch block into slender but tough filaments: baskets of all kinds and sizes, made of similar filaments, enriched with the most beautiful colors, which they alone knew how to extract from vegetable substances, and incorporate with the wood. They made also of the birch bark (which is here so strong and tenacious, that cradles and canoes are made of it), many receptacles for holding fruit and other things curiously adorned with embroidery, not inelegant, done with the sinews of deer, and leggans[1] and moquesans,[2] a very comfortable and highly ornamented substitute for shoes and stockings, then universally used in winter among the men of our own people. They had also a beautiful manufacture of deer-skin, soft-

[1] Leggins, a long gaiter for protecting the ankle and leg, spoken of in Capt. Thomas Anbury's book of travels as country boots.

[2] Moccasins, a shoe or cover for the foot, made of deer skin or other soft leather, without a sole, and ornamented on the upper side; the customary shoe worn by the American Indians. Some of these discrepancies of orthography may not be chargeable to the author, but possibly are what are known as *typographical errors.*

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ened to the consistence of the finest chamois leather, and embroidered with beads of wampum, formed like bugles; these, with great art and industry, they formed out of shells, which had the appearance of fine white porcelain, veined with purple. This embroidery showed both skill and taste, and was among themselves highly valued. They had belts, large embroidered garters, and many other ornaments, formed, first of sinews, divided to the size of coarse thread, and afterwards, when they obtained worsted thread from us, of that material, formed in a manner which I could never comprehend. It was neither knitted nor wrought in the manner of net, nor yet woven; but the texture was formed more like an officer's sash than anything I can compare it to. While the women and children were thus employed, the men sometimes assisted them in the more laborious part of their business, but oftener occupied themselves in fishing on the rivers, and drying or preserving, by means of smoke, in sheds erected for the purpose, sturgeon and large eels, which they caught in great quantities, and of an extraordinary size, for winter provision.

Boys on the verge of manhood, and ambitious to be admitted into the hunting parties of the ensuing winter, exercised themselves in trying to improve their skill in archery, by shooting birds, squirrels, and racoons. These petty huntings helped to support the little colony in the neigh-

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borhood, which however derived its principal subsistence from an exchange of their manufactures with the neighboring family for milk, bread, and other articles of food.

The summer residence of these ingenious artisans promoted a great intimacy between the females of the vicinity and the Indian women, whose sagacity and comprehension of mind were beyond belief.

It is a singular circumstance, that though they saw the negroes in every respectable family not only treated with humanity, but cherished with parental kindness, they always regarded them with contempt and dislike, as an inferior race, and would have no communication with them. It was necessary then that all conversations should be held, and all business transacted with these females, by the mistress of the family. In the infancy of the settlement the Indian language was familiar to the more intelligent inhabitants, who found it very useful, and were, no doubt, pleased with its nervous and emphatic idiom, and its lofty and sonorous cadence. It was indeed a noble and copious language, when one considers that it served as the vehicle of thought to a people whose ideas and sphere of action we should consider as so very confined.

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# Chapter XIII

## PROGRESS OF KNOWLEDGE—INDIAN MANNERS

CONVERSING with those interesting and deeply reflecting natives, was to thinking minds no mean source of entertainment. Communication soon grew easier; for the Indians had a singular facility in acquiring other languages; the children I well remember, from experimental knowledge, for I delighted to hover about the wigwam, and converse with those of the Indians, and we very frequently mingled languages. But to return: whatever comfort or advantage a good and benevolent mind possesses, it is willing to extend to others. The mother of my friend, and other matrons, who like her experienced the consolations, the hopes, and the joys of Christianity, wished those inestimable natives to share in their pure enjoyments.

Of all others these mild and practical Christians were the best fitted for making proselytes. Unlike professed missionaries, whose zeal is not always seconded by judgment, they did not begin by alarming the jealousy with which all manner of people watch over their hereditary prejudices. Engaged in active life, they had daily opportunities

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of demonstrating the truth of their religion by its influence upon their conduct. Equally unable and unwilling to enter into deep disquisitions or polemical arguments, their calm and unstudied explanations of the essential doctrines of Christianity, were the natural results which arose out of their ordinary conversation. To make this better understood, I must endeavor to explain what I have observed in the unpolished society, that occupies the wild and remote regions of different countries. Their conversation is not only more original, but, however odd the expression may appear, more philosophical than that of persons equally destitute of mental culture in more populous districts. They derive their subjects of reflection and conversation more from natural objects, which lead minds, possessing a certain degree of intelligence, more forward to trace effects to their causes. Nature there, too, is seen arrayed in virgin beauty and simple majesty. Its various aspects are more grand and impressive. Its voice is more distinctly heard, and sinks deeper into the heart. These people, more dependent on the simples of the fields and the wild fruits of the woods; better acquainted with the forms and instincts of the birds and beasts, their fellow denizens in the wild; and more observant of every constellation and every change in the sky, from living so much in the open air, have a wider range of ideas than we are aware of. With us, art every where combats nature, opposes her plainest dictates, and too often

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conquers her. The poor are so confined to the spot where their occupations lie, so engrossed by their struggles for daily bread, and so surrounded by the works of man, that those of their Creator are almost excluded from their view, at least form a very small part of the subjects that engross their thoughts. What knowledge they have is often merely the husks and orts that fall from the table of their superiors, which they swallow without chewing.

Many of those who are one degree above the lowest class, see nature in poetry, novels, and other books, and never think of looking for her any where else; like a person amused by seeing the reflection of the starry heavens or shifting clouds in a calm lake, never lifting his eyes to those objects of which he sees the imperfect though resembling pictures.

Those who live in the undisguised bosom of tranquil nature, and whose chief employment it is, by disencumbering her of waste luxuriance, to discover and improve her latent beauties, need no borrowed enthusiasm to relish the sublime and graceful features. The venerable simplicity of the sacred scriptures, has something extremely attractive for a mind in this state. The soul, which is the most familiar with its Creator, in his works, will be always the most ready to recognize him in his word. Conversations which had for their subject the nature and virtues of plants, the extent and boundaries of woods

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and lakes, and the various operations of instinct in animals, under those circumstances where they are solely directed by it, and the distinct customs and manners of various untutored nations, tended to expand the mind, and teach it to aspire to more perfect intelligence. The untaught reasoners of the woods could not but observe that the Europeans knew much that was concealed from them, and derived many benefits and much power from that knowledge. Where they saw active virtue keep pace with superior knowledge, it was natural to conclude that persons thus beneficially enlightened, had clearer and ampler views of that futurity, which to them only dimly gleamed through formless darkness. They would suppose, too, that those illuminated beings had some means of approaching nearer to that source of light and perfection from which wisdom is derived, than they themselves had attained. Their minds being thus prepared by degrees, these pious matrons (probably assisted by those lay-brothers of whom I have spoken) began to diffuse the knowledge of the distinguishing doctrines of Christianity among the elderly and well-intentioned Indian women. These did not by any means receive the truth without examination: the acuteness of intellect which discovered itself in their objections (of which I have heard many striking instances) was astonishing; yet the humble and successful instruments of enlightening those sincere and candid people, did by no means take to themselves any

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merit in making proselytes. When they found their auditors disposed to listen diligently to the truth, they sent them to the clergymen of the place, who instructed, confirmed, and baptized them. I am sorry that I have not a clear and distinct recollection of the exact manner, or the numbers, etc., of these first converts, of whom I shall say more hereafter; but I know that this was the usual process. They were, however, both zealous and persevering, and proved the means of bringing many others under the law of love, to which it is reasonable to suppose the safety of this unprotected frontier was greatly owing at that crisis, that of the first attacks of the French. The Indian women, who, from motives of attachment to particular families, or for the purpose of carrying on the small traffic already mentioned, were wont to pass their summers near the settlers, were of detached and wandering families, who preferred this mode of living to the labor of tilling the ground, which entirely devolved upon the women among the five nations. By tilling the ground I would not be understood to mean any settled mode of agriculture, requiring cattle, enclosures, or implements of husbandry. Grain made but a very subordinate part of their subsistence, which was chiefly derived from fishing and hunting. The little they had was maize; this with kidney beans and tobacco, the only plants they cultivated, was sowed in some very pleasant fields along the Mohawk river, by the women, who had no imple-

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ments of tillage but the hoe, and a kind of wooden spade. These fields lay round their *castles*, and while the women were thus employed, the men were catching and drying fish by the rivers or on the lakes. The younger girls were much busied during summer and autumn, in gathering wild fruits, berries, and grapes, which they had a peculiar mode of drying to preserve them for the winter. The great cranberry they gathered in abundance, which, without being dried, would last the whole winter, and was much used by the settlers. These dried fruits were no luxury; a fastidious taste would entirely reject them. Yet, besides furnishing another article of food, they had their use, as was evident. Without some antiseptic, they who lived the whole winter on animal food, without a single vegetable, or anything of the nature of bread, unless now and then a little maize, which they had the art of boiling down to softness in ley of wood-ashes, must have been liable to that great scourge of northern nations in their primitive state, the scurvy, had not this simple dessert been a preservative against it. Rheumatisms, and sometimes agues affected them, but no symptom of any cutaneous disease was ever seen on an Indian.

The stragglers from the confines of the orchards did not fail to join their tribes in winter; and were zealous, and often successful in spreading their new opinions. Indians supposed that every country had its own mode of honoring the great spirits, to whom

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all were equally acceptable. This had, on one hand, the bad effect of making them satisfied with their own vague and undefined notions; and on the other, the good one of making them very tolerant of those of others. If you do not insult their belief (for mode of worship they have scarce any), they will hear you talk of yours with the greatest patience and attention. Their good breeding in this respect, was really superlative. No Indian ever interrupted any, the most idle talker: but when they concluded, he would deliberately, methodically, and not ungracefully answer or comment upon all they had said, in a manner which showed that not a word had escaped him.

Lady Mary Montague ludicrously says, that the court of Vienna was the paradise of old women; and that there is no other place in the world where a woman past fifty excites the least interest. Had her travels extended to the interior of North America, she would have seen another instance of this inversion of the common mode of thinking. Here a woman never was of consequence, till she had a son old enough to fight the battles of his country: from that date she held a superior rank in society; was allowed to live at ease, and even called to consultations on national affairs. In savage and warlike countries, the reign of beauty is very short, and its influence comparatively limited. The girls in childhood had a very pleasing appearance; but excepting their fine hair, eyes and teeth, every

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external grace was soon banished by perpetual drudgery, carrying burdens too heavy to be borne, and other slavish employments considered beneath the dignity of the men. These walked before, erect and graceful, decked with ornaments, which set off to advantage the symmetry of their well formed persons, while the poor women followed, meanly attired, bent under the weight of the children and utensils they carried everywhere with them; and disfigured and degraded by ceaseless toils. They were very early married; for a Mohawk had no other servant but his wife; and whenever he commenced hunter, it was requisite that he should have some one to carry his load, cook his kettle, make his moquesans, and above all, produce the young warriors who were to succeed him in the honors of the chase, and of the tomahawk. Wherever man is a mere hunter, woman is a mere slave. It is domestic intercourse that softens man, and elevates woman; and of that there can be little, where the employments and amusements are not in common: the ancient Caledonians honored the fair; but then, it is to be observed, they were fair huntresses, and moved, in the light of their beauty, to the hill of roes; and the culinary toils were entirely left to the rougher sex. When the young warrior above alluded to made his appearance, it softened the cares of his mother; who well knew that when he grew up, every deficiency in tenderness to his wife would be made up in superabundant duty and affection to

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her. If it were possible to carry filial veneration to excess, it was done here; for all other charities were absorbed in it. I wonder this system of depressing the sex in their early years to exalt them when all their juvenile attractions were flown, and when mind alone can distinguish them, has not occurred to our modern reformers. The Mohawks took good care not to admit their women to share their prerogatives, till they approved themselves good wives and mothers.

This digression, long as it is, has a very intimate connection with the character of my friend; who early adopted the views of her family, in regard to those friendly Indians, which greatly enlarged her mind, and ever after influenced her conduct. She was, even in childhood, well acquainted with their language, opinions, and customs; and, like every other person, possessed of a liberality or benevolence of mind, whom chance had brought acquainted with them, was exceedingly partial to those high-souled and generous natives. The Mohawk language was early familiar to her; she spoke Dutch and English with equal ease and purity; was no stranger to the French tongue; and could (I think) read German. I have heard her speak it. From the conversations which her active curiosity led her to hold with native Africans brought into her father's family, she was more intimately acquainted with the customs, manners, and government of their native country, than she

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could have been, by reading all that was ever written on the subject. Books are, no doubt, the granaries of knowledge: but a diligent, inquiring mind, in the active morning of life, will find it strewed like manna over the face of the earth; and need not, in all cases, rest satisfied with intelligence accumulated by others, and tinctured with their passions and prejudices. Whoever reads Homer or Shakespeare may daily discover that they describe both nature and art from their own observation. Consequently you see the images, reflected from the mirror of their great minds, differing from the descriptions of others, as the reflection of an object in all its colors and proportions from any polished surface, does from a shadow on a wall, or from a picture drawn from recollection. The enlarged mind of my friend, and her simple yet easy and dignified manners, made her readily adapt herself to those with whom she conversed, and every where command respect and kindness: and, on a nearer acquaintance, affection followed; but she had too much sedateness and independence to adopt those caressing and insinuating manners, by which the vain and the artful so soon find their way into shallow minds. Her character did not captivate at once, but gradually unfolded itself; and you had always something new to discover. Her style was grave and masculine, without the least embellishment; and at the same time so pure, that everything she said might

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be printed without correction, and so plain, that the most ignorant and most inferior persons were never at a loss to comprehend it. It possessed, too, a wonderful flexibility; it seemed to rise and fall with the subject. I have not met with a style which, to a noble and uniform simplicity, united such variety of expression. Whoever drinks knowledge pure at its sources, solely from a delight in filling the capacities of a large mind, without the desire of dazzling or outshining others; whoever speaks for the sole purpose of conveying to other minds those ideas, from which he himself has received pleasure and advantage, may possess this chaste and natural style: but it is not to be acquired by art or study.



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# Chapter XIV

## MARRIAGE OF MISS SCHUYLER — DESCRIPTION OF THE FLATS

MISS S. had the happiness to captivate her cousin Philip,[1] eldest son of her uncle, who was ten years older than herself, and was *in all respects* to be accounted a suitable, and in the worldly sense, an advantageous match for her. His father was highly satisfied to have the two

[1] This Col. Philip was the eldest son of Col. Peter Schuyler and his wife, Maria Van Rensselaer, baptized January 15, 1696, and but five years older than his cousin whom he married. His mother was the daughter of Jeremiah Van Rensselaer, and a granddaughter of the first patroon of Rensselaerwyck. He died February 16, 1758, and his monument is the oldest and most conspicuous one in the family burial ground at the Flats, resting horizontally upon pillars, and bearing the following inscription.

In Memory of
COL^NL. PHILIP SCHUYLER,
A Gentleman who was Improved
in Several publick employments
in which he Acted with integrity,
he was singularly hospitable,
a Sincere friend, kind Master,
a most tender Husband;
he Liv'd Respected and died greatly Lamented.
Feb. 16th, 1758, Aged 62 years.

Madame Schuyler was buried by his side, but the metal tablet on the monument marking her grave is gone. It is to be replaced by a new tablet.

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objects on whom he had bestowed so much care and culture united, but did not live to see this happy connection take place. They were married in the year 1719, when she was in the eighteenth year of her age.[1] When the old colonel died, he left considerable possessions to be divided among his children, and from the quantity of plate, paintings, etc., which they shared, there is reason to believe he must have brought some of his wealth from Holland, as in those days people had little means of enriching themselves in new settlements. He had also considerable possessions in a place near the town, now called Fishkill,[2] about twenty miles below Albany.[3] His family residence, however, was at the Flats, a fertile and beautiful plain on the banks of the river. He possessed about two miles on a stretch of that rich and level champain. This possession was bounded on the east by the river Hudson, whose high banks overhung the stream and its pebbly strand, and were both adorned and defended by elms (larger than ever I have seen in any other place), decked with natural festoons of wild grapes, which abound along the banks of this noble stream. These lofty elms

[1] They were married December 29, 1720, and Col. Peter Schuyler died February 19, 1724.

[2] Miss Schuyler's father had a large and valuable tract of land on the Fishkill at Saratoga, fifty miles above Albany, and the father of Philip Schuyler had a large landed property at Kinderhook and in its neighborhood, below Albany.

[3] Query, Catskill? Fishkill is 100 miles from Albany.

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were left when the country was cleared to fortify the banks against the masses of thick ice which make war upon them in spring, when the melting snows burst this glassy pavement, and raise the waters many feet above their usual level. This precaution not only answers that purpose, but gratifies the mind by presenting to the eye a remnant of wild magnificence of nature amidst the smiling scenes produced by varied and successful cultivation. As you came along by the north end of the town, where the patroon had his seat, you afterwards passed by the enclosures of the citizens, where, as formerly described, they planted their corn, and arrived at the Flats, Col. Schuyler's possession.[1] On the right you saw the river in all its beauty, there above a mile broad. On the opposite side the view was bounded by steep hills, covered with lofty pines, from which a waterfall descended,[2] which not only gave animation to the

[1] In the last century, the road passed down in front of the patroon's mansion, to the river, and followed its bank northward to Stillwater, where the troops took bateaux. This ancient road was known as the king's highway. In front of Madame Schuyler's house those armies annually passed to the theatre of war on Lake Champlain, and sometimes encamped on the ground now occupied by the southern portion of West Troy.

"No. 2. Old Schuyler House" was the residence of the American Lady. Above and to the left lived Peter (Pedrom) Schuyler. (P. P. Schuyler was a son of the latter.) To the left of P. P. Schuyler resided Jeremiah Schuyler. His house was subsequently occupied by his grandson, Abraham N. Cuyler. Southeast of No. 2 is the island Mrs. Grant describes so graphically.

[2] This waterfall, known as the Wynant's kill, became, half a cen-

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TILDEN FOUNDATIONS.

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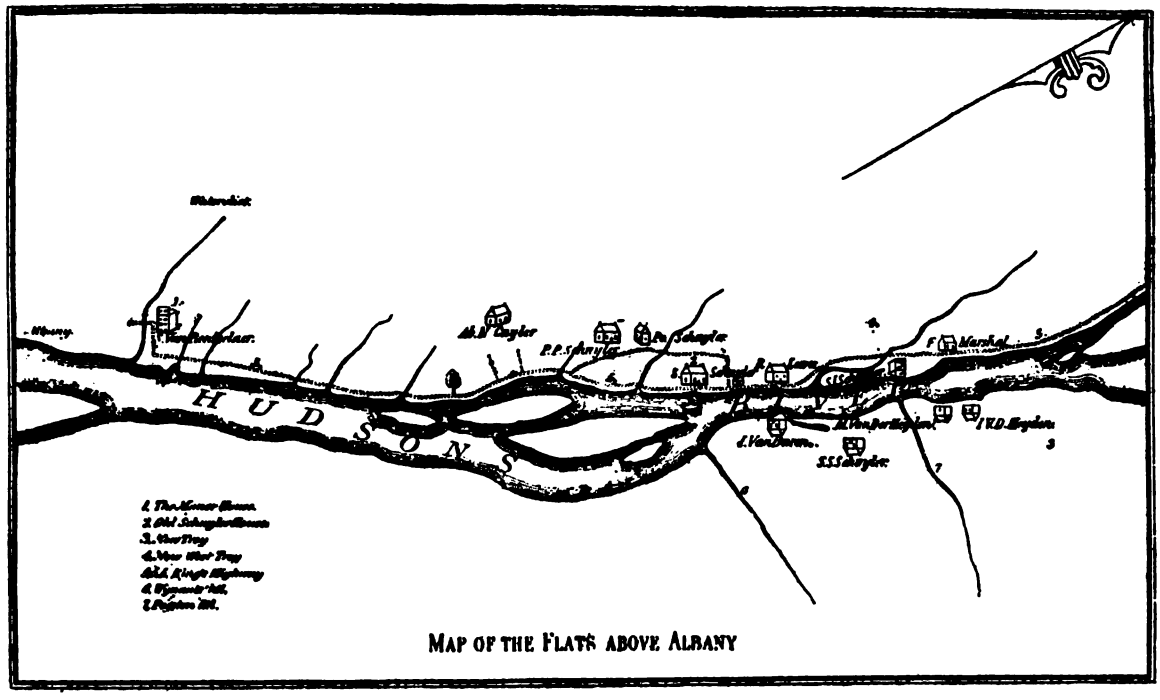


MAP OF THE FLATS ABOVE ALBANY

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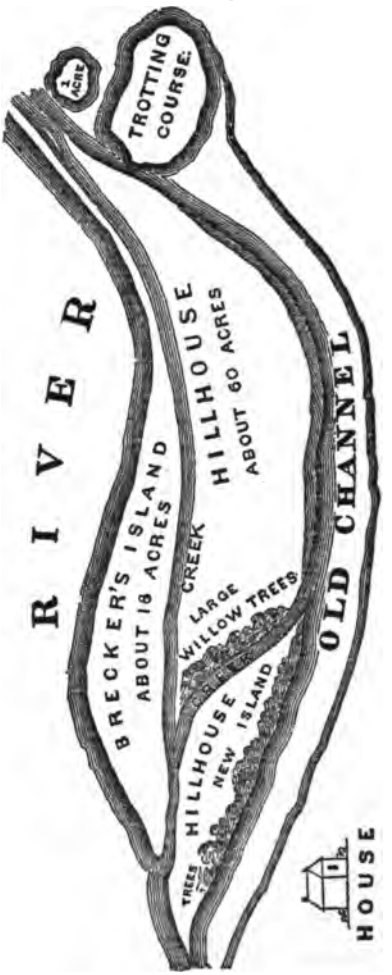
sylvan scene, but was the best barometer imaginable, foretelling by its varied and intelligible sounds every approaching change, not only of the weather, but of the wind. Opposite to the grounds lay an island, above a mile in length, and about a quarter in breadth, which also belonged to the colonel: exquisitely beautiful it was, and though the haunt I most delighted in, it is not in my power to describe it. Imagine a little Egypt, yearly overflowed, and of the most redundant fertility. This charming spot was at first covered




tury ago, the site of the Albany nail works, whose fires light the skies by night, and send up pillars of smoke by day. The island has acquired a considerable altitude since the time of Mrs. Grant's residence there, and is otherwise changed, being in fact two islands, a narrow creek running between them.

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with wood, like the rest of the country, except a long field in the middle where the Indians had probably cultivated maize; round this was a broad shelving border, where the grey and the weeping willows, the bending osier, and numberless aquatic plants not known in this country, were allowed to flourish in the utmost luxuriance, while within, some tall sycamores and wild fruit trees towered above the rest. Thus was formed a broad belt, which in winter proved an impenetrable barrier against the broken ice, and in summer was the haunt of numberless birds and small animals, who dwelt in perfect safety, it being impossible to penetrate it. Numberless were the productions of this luxuriant spot; never was a richer field for a botanist; for though the ice was kept off, the turbid waters of the spring flood overflowed it annually, and not only deposited a rich sediment, but left the seeds of various plants swept from the shores it had passed by. The centre of the island, which was much higher than the sides, produced, with a slight degree of culture, the most abundant crops of wheat, hay, and flax. At the end of this island, which was exactly opposite to the family mansion, a long sand-bank extended: on this was a very valuable fishing-place, of which a considerable profit might be made. In summer, when the water was low, this narrow stripe (for such it was) came in sight, and furnished an amusing spectacle; for there the bald or white-headed eagle (a large pic-

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turesque bird, very frequent in this country), the ospray, the heron, and the curlew, used to stand in great numbers in a long row, like a military arrangement, for a whole summer day, fishing for perch and a kind of fresh-water herring which abounded there. At the same season a variety of wild ducks, who bred on the shores of the island (among which was a small white diver of an elegant form), led forth their young to try their first excursion. What a scene have I beheld on a calm summer evening! There indeed were "fringed banks" richly fringed, and wonderfully variegated; where every imaginable shade of color mingled, and where life teemed prolific on every side. The river, a perfect mirror, reflecting the pine-covered hills opposite; and the pliant shades that bend without a wind, round this enchanting island, while hundreds of the white divers, saw-bill ducks with scarlet heads, teal, and other aquatic birds, sported at once on the calm waters. At the discharge of a gun from the shore, these feathered beauties all disappeared at once, as if by magic, and in an instant rose to view in different places.

How much they seemed to enjoy that life which was so new to them; for they were the young broods first led forth to sport upon the waters. While the fixed attitude and lofty port of the large birds of prey, who were ranged upon the sandy shelf, formed an inverted picture in the same clear

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mirror, and were a pleasing contrast to the playful multitude around. These they never attempted to disturb, well aware of the facility of escape which their old retreats afforded them. Such of my readers as have had patience to follow me to this favorite isle, will be, ere now, as much bewildered as I have often been myself on its luxuriant shores. To return to the southward, on the confines of what might then be called an interminable wild, rose two gently sloping eminences, about half a mile from the shore. From each of these a large brook descended, bending through the plain, and having their course marked by the shades of primeval trees and shrubs left there to shelter the cattle when the ground was cleared. On these eminences, in the near neighborhood and full view of the mansion at the Flats, were two large and well built dwellings, inhabited by Colonel Schuyler's two younger sons, Peter and Jeremiah. To the eldest was allotted the place inhabited by his father, which, from its lower situation and level surface, was called the Flats. There was a custom prevalent among the new settlers something like that of gavelkind; they made a pretty equal division of lands among their younger sons. The eldest, by preëminence of birth, had a larger share, and generally succeeded to the domain inhabited by his father, with the slaves, cattle, and effects upon it.

This, in the present instance, was the lot of the eldest son of that family whose possessions I have

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been describing. His portion of land on the shore of the river was scarcely equal in value to those of his brother, to whose possessions the brooks I have mentioned formed a natural boundary, dividing them from each other, and from his. To him was allotted the costly furniture of the family, of which paintings, plate, and china constituted the valuable part; everything else being merely plain and useful. They had also, a large house in Albany, which they occupied occasionally.

I have neglected to describe in its right place the termination or back ground of the landscape I have such delight in recollecting. There the solemn and interminable forest was varied here and there by rising grounds, near streams where birch and hickory, maple and poplar, cheered the eye with a lighter green, through the prevailing shade of dusky pines. On the border of the wood, where the trees had been thinned for firing, was a broad shrubbery all along, which marked the edges of the wood above the possessions of the brothers as far as it extended.

This was formed of sumac, a shrub with leaves continually changing color through all the varieties from blending green and yellow to orange tawney, and adorned with large lilac-shaped clusters of bright scarlet grains, covered with pungent dust of a sharp flavor, at once saline and acid. This the Indians used as salt to their food, and for the dyeing of different colors. The red glow, which was the

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general result of this natural border, had a fine effect, thrown out from the dusky shades which towered behind.

To the northward, a sandy tract, covered with low pines, formed a boundary betwixt the Flats and Stonehook,[1] which lay further up the river.

[1] Steenhoek was in front of the plat now occupied by the Arsenal, and the Steenhoek kill is still seen issuing from the government grounds, draining the swamp in the rear.

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# Chapter XV

## PHILIP SCHUYLER — HIS MANAGEMENT OF THE INDIANS

PHILIP SCHUYLER, who on the death of his father, succeeded to the inheritance I have been describing, was a person of a mild, benevolent character, and an excellent understanding, which had received more culture than was usual in that country. But whether he had returned to Europe, for the purpose of acquiring knowledge in the public seminaries there, or had been instructed by any of the French protestants, who were sometimes retained in the principal families for such purposes, I do not exactly know; but am led rather to suppose the latter, from the connection which always subsisted between that class of people and the Schuyler family.

When the intimacy between this gentleman and the subject of these memoirs took place she was a mere child; for the colonel, as he was soon after called, was ten years older than she. This was singular there, where most men married under twenty. But his early years were occupied by momentous concerns; for, by this time, the public safety began to be endangered by the insidious wiles

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of the French Canadians, to whom our frontier settlers began to be formidable rivals in the fur trade, which the former wished to engross. In process of time, the Indians, criminally indulged with strong liquors by the most avaricious and unprincipled of the traders, began to have an insatiable desire for them, and the traders' avidity for gain increased in the same proportion.

Occasional fraud on the one hand gave rise to occasional violence on the other. Mutual confidence decayed, and hostility betrayed itself, when intoxication laid open every thought. Some of our traders were, as the colonists alleged, treacherously killed in violation of treaties solemnly concluded between them and the offending tribes.

The mediation and protection of the Mohawk tribes were as usual appealed to. But these shrewd politicians saw evident the value of their protection to an unwarlike people, who made no effort to defend themselves; and who, distant from the source of authority, and contributing nothing to the support of government, were in a great measure neglected. They began also to observe, that their new friends were extending their possessions on every side, and conscious of their wealth and increasing numbers, did not assiduously cultivate the good will of their faithful allies as formerly. These nations, savage as we may imagine them, were as well skilled in the arts of negotiation as the most polite Europeans. They waged perpetual war with

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each other about their hunting grounds; each tribe laying claim to some vast wild territory destined for that purpose, and divided from other districts by boundaries which we should consider as merely ideal, but which they perfectly understood. Yet these were not so distinctly defined as to preclude all dispute; and a casual encroachment on this imaginary deer park, was a sufficient ground of hostility; and this, not for the value of the few deer or bears which might be killed, but that they thought their national honor violated by such an aggression. That system of revenge, which subsisted with equal force among them all, admitted of no sincere conciliation till the aggrieved party had obtained at least an equal number of scalps and prisoners for those that they had lost. This bloody reckoning was not easily adjusted. After a short and hollow truce, the remaining balance on either side afforded a pretext for new hostility, and time to solicit new alliances; for which last purpose much art and much persuasive power of eloquence were employed.

But the grand mystery of Indian politics was the flattery, the stratagem, and address employed in detaching other tribes from the alliance of their enemies. There could not be a stronger proof of the restless and turbulent nature of ambition than these artful negotiations, the consequence of perpetual hostility, where one would think there was so little ground for quarrel; and that amongst a people

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who individually, were by no means quarrelsome or covetous, and seemed in their private transactions with each other, impressed with a deep sense of moral rectitude; who reasoned soundly, reflected deeply, and acted in most cases consequentially. Property there was none, to afford a pretext for war, excepting a little possessed by the Mohawks, which they knew so well how to defend, that their boundaries were never violated; "For their awe and their fear was upon all the nations round about." Territory could not be the genuine subject of contention in these thinly peopled forests, where the ocean and the pole were the only limits of their otherwise boundless domain. The consequence attached to the authority of chiefs, who, as such, possessed no more property than others, and had not power to command a single vassal for their own personal benefit, was not such as to be the object of those wars. Their chief privilege was that of being first in every dangerous enterprise. They were loved and honored, but never, that I have heard of, traduced, envied, or removed from their painful preëminence.

The only way in which these wars can be accounted for, is, first, from the general depravity of our nature, and from a singularly deep feeling of injury, and a high sense of national honor. They were not the hasty outbreakings of savage fury, but were commenced in the most solemn and deliberate manner; and not without a prelude of remon-

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strances, from the aggrieved party, and attempts to soothe and conciliate from the other. This digression must not be considered as altogether from the purpose. To return to the Indians, whose history has its use in illustrating that of mankind: they now became fully sensible of the importance they derived from the increased wealth and undefended state of the settlement. They discovered too, that they held the balance between the interior settlements of France and England, which, though still distant from each other, were daily approximating.

The Mohawks, though always brave and always faithful, felt a very allowable repugnance to expose the lives of their warriors in defence of those who made no effort to defend themselves; who were neither protected by the arms of their sovereign, nor by their own courage. They came down to hold a solemn congress, at which the heads of the Schuyler and Cuyler families assisted; and where it was agreed that hostilities should be delayed for the present, the hostile nations pacified by concessions and presents, and means adopted to put the settlement in a state of defence against future aggressions.

On all such occasions, when previously satisfied with regard to the justice of the grounds of quarrel, the Mohawks promised their hearty coöperation. This they were the readier to do, as their young brother Philip (for so they styled Colonel Schuyler) offered not only to head such troops as might be raised for this purpose, but to engage his two broth-

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ers, who were well acquainted with the whole frontier territory, to serve on the same terms. This was a singular instance of public spirit in a young patriot, who was an entire stranger to the profession of arms; and whose sedate equanimity of character was adverse to every species of rashness or enthusiasm. Meantime the provisions of the above-mentioned treaty could not be carried into effect, till they were ratified by the assembly at New York, and approved by the governor. Of this there was little doubt; the difficulty was to raise and pay the troops. In the interim, while steps were taking to legalize the project, in 1719, the marriage betwixt Colonel Schuyler and his cousin took place under the happiest auspices.

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# Chapter XVI

## ACCOUNT OF THE THREE BROTHERS

COLONEL Schuyler and his two brothers all possessed a superior degree of intellect, and uncommon external advantages. Peter, the only one remaining when I knew the family, was still a comely and dignified looking old gentleman; and I was told his brothers were at least equal to him in this respect. His youngest brother Jeremiah,[1] who was much beloved for a disposition, frank, cheerful and generous to excess, had previously married a lady from New York; with whom he obtained some fortune: a thing then singular in that country. This lady, whom, in her declining years, I knew very well, was the daughter of a wealthy and distinguished family of French protestants. She was lively, sensible, and well informed.

Peter,[2] the second, was married to a native of Albany. She died early; but left behind two children; and the reputation of much worth and

[1] Peter and Jeremiah Schuyler were twins, and baptized in the church January 12, 1698, the youngest of the children of Col. Peter, whom the Indians called Quidor. Peter junior married Catharine Groesbeck, and Jeremiah married Susanna ——, a Huguenot lady of New York. Jeremiah was buried at the Flats in 1753, but Peter was living September, 1771.

[2] Peter the third, not the second. See note on p. 253.



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great attention to her conjugal and maternal duties. All these relations lived with each other, and with the new married lady, in habits of the most cordial intimacy and perfect confidence. They seemed, indeed, actuated by one spirit; having in all things similar views and similar principles. Looking up to the colonel as the head of the family, whose worth and affluence reflected consequence upon them all, they never dreamt of envying either his superior manners, or his wife's attainments, which they looked upon as a benefit and ornament to the whole.

Soon after their marriage they visited New York, which they continued to do once a year in the earlier period of their marriage, on account of their connection in that city, and the pleasing and intelligent society that was always to be met with there, both on account of its being the seat of government, and the residence of the commander-in-chief on the continent, who was then necessarily invested with considerable power and privileges, and had, as well as the governor for the time being, a petty court assembled round him. At a very early period a better style of manners, greater ease, frankness, and polish prevailed at New York, than in any of the neighboring provinces. There was, in particular, a Brigadier-general Hunter,[1] of whom I have heard Mrs. Schuyler talk a great deal, as coinciding with

[1] Robert Hunter succeeded Francis Lovelace as governor of New York in 1709, and was governor of Jamaica, in 1728.

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her husband successively, in their plans either of defence or improvement. He, I think, was then governor; and was as acceptable to the Schuylers for his colloquial talents and friendly disposition, as estimable for his public spirit and application to business, in which respects he was not equalled by any of his successors. In his circle the young couple were much distinguished. There were too among those leading families, the Livingstons and Rensselaers, friends connected with them both by blood and attachment. There was also another distinguished family to whom they were allied, and with whom they lived in cordial intimacy; these were the De Lanceys, of French descent, but, by subsequent intermarriages, blended with the Dutch inhabitants. Of these there were very many then in New York, as will be hereafter explained; but as these conscientious exiles were persons allied in religion to the primitive settlers, and regular and industrious in their habits, they soon mingled with and became a part of that society, which was enlivened by their sprightly manners, and benefited by the useful arts they brought along with them. In this mixed society, which must have had attraction for young people of superior, and, in some degree, cultivated intellect, this well-matched pair took great pleasure; and here, no doubt, was improved that liberality of mind and manners which so much distinguished them from the less enlightened inhabitants of their native city. They were

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so much caressed in New York, and found so many charms in the intelligent and comparatively polished society of which they made a part there, that they had at first some thoughts of residing there. These, however, soon gave way to the persuasions of the colonel, with whom they principally resided till his death, which happened 1721,[1] two years after. This union was productive of all that felicity which might be expected to result from entire congeniality not of sentiment only, but of original dispositions, attachments, and modes of living and thinking. He had been accustomed to consider her as a child with tender endearment. She had been used to look up to him from infancy as the model of manly excellence; and they drew knowledge and virtue from the same fountain, in the mind of that respectable parent whom they equally loved and revered.

[1] He seems to have been buried 22 September, 1724. See Pearson's "Early Settlers of Albany," also note 1 on p. 147.

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ST. PETER'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN STATE STREET, ERECTED IN 1714

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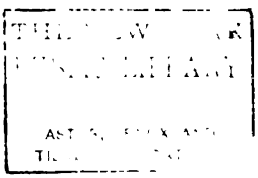

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# Chapter XVII

## THE HOUSE AND RURAL ECONOMY OF THE FLATS — BIRDS AND INSECTS

I HAVE already sketched a general outline of that pleasant home to which the colonel was now about to bring his beloved.

Before I resume my narrative, I shall indulge myself in a still more minute account of the premises, the mode of living, etc., which will afford a more distinct idea of the country; all the wealthy and informed people of the settlement living on a smaller scale, pretty much in the same manner. Be it known, however, that the house I had so much delight in recollecting, had no pretension to grandeur, and very little to elegance. It was a large brick house of two or rather three stories (for there were excellent attics), besides a sunk story, finished with the exactest neatness. The lower floor had two spacious rooms, with large light closets; on the first there were three rooms, and in the upper one four. Through the middle of the house was a very wide passage, with opposite front and back doors, which in summer admitted a stream of air peculiarly grateful to the languid senses. It was furnished with chairs and pictures like a summer parlor.

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Here the family usually sat in hot weather, when there were no ceremonious strangers.

Valuable furniture (though perhaps not very well chosen or assorted) was the favorite luxury of these people; and in all the houses I remember, except those of the brothers, who were every way more liberal, the mirrors, the paintings, the china, but above all, the state bed, were considered as the family seraphim, secretly worshiped, and only exhibited on very rare occasions. But in Col. Schuyler's family the rooms were merely shut up to keep the flies, which in that country are an absolute nuisance, from spoiling the furniture.[1] Another motive was, that they might be pleasantly cool when opened for company. This house had also two appendages common to all those belonging to persons in easy circumstances there. One was a large portico at the door, with a few steps leading up to it, and floored like a room; it was open at the sides, and had seats all round. Above was either a slight wooden roof, painted like an awning, or a covering of lattice-work, over which a transplanted vine spread its luxuriant leaves and numerous clusters. These, though small, and rather too acid till sweetened by the frost, had a beautiful appearance. What gave an air of liberty and safety to these rustic porticoes, which always produced in my mind a sensation of pleasure that I know not

[1] They still preserve at the house of Mr. Stephen Schuyler, some of the furniture of Madame Schuyler.

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how to define, was the number of little birds domesticated there. For their accommodation there was a small shelf built round, where they nestled, sacred from the touch of slaves and children, who were taught to regard them as the good genii of the place, not to be disturbed with impunity.

I do not recollect sparrows there,[1] except the wood-sparrow. These little birds were of various kinds peculiar to the country; but the one most frequent and familiar was a pretty little creature, of a bright cinnamon color, called a wren, though little resembling the one to which we give that name, for it is more sprightly, and flies higher. Of these and other small birds, hundreds gave and received protection around this hospitable dwelling. The protection they received consisted merely in the privilege of being let alone. That which they bestowed was of more importance than any inhabitant of Britain can imagine. In these new countries,

[1] English sparrows, as they are commonly called, were introduced into Albany about the year 1865, where they were tenderly cherished and fed, as the enemy of worms that infested shade trees in unusual number and variety. Their popularity was seriously diminished, however, when it was discovered that they had driven away the wrens, blue-birds, robins, and other familiar birds, whose cheerful notes had been substituted by the single harsh and monotonous chirp of their successors. Out of the city precincts a different reception awaited them. There the husbandman, jealous of his grain fields, saluted the sparrow with the shot-gun. Their presence soon began to be regarded in the city as an unequal exchange for the popular songsters that had been driven away, and their habits to be attended with unpleasant annoyance.

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where man has scarce asserted his dominion, life swarms abundant on every side; the insect population is numerous beyond belief, and the birds that feed on them are in proportion to their abundance. In process of time, when their sheltering woods are cleared, all these recede before their master, but not before his empire is fully established. These minute aërial foes are more harassing than the terrible inhabitants of the forest, and more difficult to expel. It is only by protecting, and in some sort domesticating, these little winged allies, who attack them in their own element, that the conqueror of the lion and tamer of the elephant can hope to sleep in peace, or eat his meals unpolluted. While breakfasting or drinking tea in the airy portico, which was often the scene of these meals, birds were constantly gliding over the table with a butterfly, grasshopper, or cicada in their bills, to feed their young, who were chirping above. These familiar inmates brushed by without ceremony, while the chimney swallow, the martin, and other hirundines in countless numbers darted past in pursuit of this aërial population, while the fields resounded with the ceaseless chirping of many gay insects unknown to our more temperate summers. These were now and then mingled with the animated and not unpleasing cry of the tree-frog, a creature of that species, but of a light slender form, almost transparent, and of a lively green; it is dry to the touch, and has not the dank moisture of its aquatic

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relations; in short it is a pretty lively creature, with a singular and cheerful note. This loud and not unpleasing insect chorus, with the swarms of gay butterflies in constant motion, enliven scenes to which the prevalence of woods, rising "shade above shade" on every side, would otherwise give a still and solemn aspect. Several objects, which with us are no small additions to the softened changes and endless charms of rural scenery, it must be confessed are wanting there. No lark welcomes the sun that rises to gild the dark forests and gleaming lakes of America; no mellow thrush or deep-toned blackbird warbles through these awful solitudes, or softens the balmy hour of twilight with

"The liquid language of the *groves*."

Twilight itself, the mild and shadowy hour, so soothing to every feeling, every pensive mind; that soft transition from day to night, so dear to peace, so due to meditation, is here scarce known, at least only known to have its shortness regretted. No daisy hastens to meet the spring, or embellishes the meads in summer; here no purple heath exhales its wholesome odor, or decks the arid waste with the chastened glow of its waving bells. No *bonny* broom, such as enlivens the narrow vales of Scotland with gaudy bloom, nor flowering furze with its golden blossoms, defying the cold blasts of early spring, animate their sandy wilds. There the white-blossomed sloe does not forerun the

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orchard's bloom, nor the pale primrose shelter its modest head beneath the tangled shrubs. Nature, bountiful yet not profuse, has assigned her various gifts to various climes, in such a manner that none can claim a decided preëminence; and every country has peculiar charms, which endear it to the natives beyond any other. I have been tempted by lively recollections into a digression rather unwarrantable. To return:

At the back of the large house was a smaller and lower one, so joined to it as to make the form of a cross. There one or two lower and smaller rooms below, and the same number above, afforded a refuge to the family during the rigors of winter, when the spacious summer rooms would have been intolerably cold, and the smoke of prodigious wood fires would have sullied the elegantly clean furniture. Here, too, was a sunk story, where the kitchen was immediately below the eating parlor, and increased the general warmth of the house. In summer the negroes resided in slight outer kitchens, where food was dressed for the family. Those who wrought in the fields, often had their simple dinner cooked without, and ate it under the shade of a great tree. One room I should have said, in the greater house only, was opened for the reception of company; all the rest were bed-chambers for their accommodation, while the domestic friends of the family occupied neat little bedrooms in the attics, or in the winter house.

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This house contained no drawing-room; that was an unheard-of luxury; the winter rooms had carpets; the lobby had oil-cloth painted in lozenges, to imitate blue and white marble. The best bedroom was hung with family portraits, some of which were admirably executed; and in the eating room, which, by the bye, was rarely used for that purpose, were some fine scripture paintings; that which made the greatest impression on my imagination, and seemed to be universally admired, was one of Esau coming to demand the anticipated blessing; the noble manly figure of the luckless hunter, and the anguish expressed in his comely though strong-featured countenance, I shall never forget. The house fronted the river, on the brink of which, under shades of elm and sycamore, ran the great road towards Saratoga, Stillwater, and the northern lakes; a little simple avenue of morella cherry trees, enclosed with a white rail, led to the road and river, not three hundred yards distant. Adjoining to this, on the south side, was an enclosure, subdivided into three parts, of which the first was a small hay field, opposite the south end of the house; the next, not so long, a garden; and the third, by far the largest, an orchard. These were surrounded by simple deal fences. Now let not the genius that presides over pleasure-grounds, nor any of his elegant votaries, revolt with disgust while I mention the unseemly ornaments which were exhibited on the stakes to which

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the deals of these same fences were bound. Truly they consisted of the skeleton heads of horses and cattle in as great numbers as could be procured, stuck upon the above said poles. This was not mere ornament either, but a most hospitable arrangement for the accommodation of the small familiar birds before described. The jaws are fixed on the pole, and the skull uppermost. The wren, on seeing a skull thus placed, never fails to enter by the orifice, which is too small to admit the hand of an infant, lines the pericranium with small twigs and horse hair, and there lays her eggs in full security. It is very amusing to see the little creature carelessly go out and in at this little aperture, though you should be standing immediately beside it. Not satisfied with providing these singular asylums for their feathered friends, the negroes never fail to make a small round hole in the crown of every old hat they can lay their hands on, and nail it to the end of the kitchen, for the same purpose. You often see in such a one, at once, thirty or forty of these odd little domicils, with the inhabitants busily going out and in.

Besides all these salutary provisions for the domestic comfort of the birds, there was, in clearing the way for their first establishment, a tree always left in the middle of the back yard, for their sole emolument: this tree being purposely pollarded at midsummer, when all the branches were full of sap. Wherever there had been a branch the decay

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of the inside produced a hole; and every hole was the habitation of a bird. These were of various kinds; some of which had a pleasing note, but on the whole, their songsters are far inferior to ours. I rather dwell on these minutiæ, as they not only mark the peculiarities of the country, but convey very truly the image of a people not too refined for happiness, which, in the process of elegant luxury, is apt to die of disgust.

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# Chapter XVIII

## DESCRIPTION OF COLONEL SCHUYLER'S BARN

ADJOINING to the orchard was the most spacious barn I ever beheld; which I shall describe for the benefit of such of my readers as have never seen a building constructed on a plan so comprehensive. This barn, which, as will hereafter appear, answered many beneficial purposes besides those usually allotted for such edifices, was of a vast size, at least an hundred feet long, and sixty wide. The roof rose to a very great height in the midst, and sloped down till it came within ten feet of the ground, when the walls commenced; which, like the whole of this fabric, was formed of wood. It was raised three feet from the ground, by beams resting on stone; and on these beams were laid in the middle of the building a very massive oak floor. Before the door was a large sill, sloping downwards, of the same materials. About twelve feet in breadth on each side of this capacious building were divided off for cattle; on one side ran a manger, at the above mentioned distance from the wall, the whole length of the building, with a rack above it; on the others were stalls for the other cattle, running also the whole length of the building. The cattle and horses

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stood with their hinder parts to the wall, and their heads projecting towards the threshing floor. There was a prodigious large box or open chest in one side built up, for holding the corn after it was thrashed; and the roof, which was very lofty and spacious, was supported by large cross beams; from one to the other of these was stretched a great number of long poles, so as to form a sort of open loft, on which the whole rich crop was laid up. The floor of those parts of the barn, which answered the purposes of a stable and cow-house, was made of thick slab deals, laid loosely over the supporting beams. And the mode of cleaning those places was by turning the boards, and permitting the dung and litter to fall into the receptacles left open below for the purpose: from thence, in spring they were often driven down the river, the soil in its original state not requiring the aid of manure. In the front[1] of this vast edifice there were prodigious folding doors, and two others that opened behind.

Certainly never did cheerful rural toils wear a more exhilarating aspect than while the domestics were lodging the luxuriant harvest in this capacious repository. When speaking of the doors, I should have mentioned that they were made in the gable ends; those in the back equally large, to correspond with those in the front; while on each side of the

[1] By the front is meant the gable end, which contains the entrance. — *Mrs. Grant.*

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great doors were smaller ones, for the cattle and horses to enter. Whenever the corn or hay was reaped or cut, and ready for carrying home, which in that dry and warm climate happened in a very few days, a wagon loaded with hay, for instance, was driven into the midst of this great barn, loaded also with numberless large grasshoppers, butterflies, and cicadas, who came along with the hay. From the top of the wagon, this was immediately forked up into the loft of the barn, in the midst of which was an open space left for the purpose; and then the unloaded wagon drove, in rustic state, out of the great door at the other end. In the meantime every member of the family witnessed, or assisted in this summary process; by which the building and thatching of stacks was at once saved; and the whole crop and cattle were thus compendiously lodged under one roof.

The cheerfulness of this animated scene was much heightened by the quick appearance, and vanishing of the swallows; who twittered among their high-built dwellings in the roof. Here, as in every other instance, the safety of these domestic friends was attended to; and an abode provided for them. In the front of this barn were many holes, like those of a pigeon-house, for the accommodation of the martin:[1] that being the species

[1] The martin, the largest of the swallow family, has disappeared from this locality. Seventy years ago elevated boxes were provided for their accommodation in rearing their young at many residences in

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to which this kind of home seems most congenial; and, in the inside of the barn, I have counted above fourscore at once. In the winter, when the earth was buried deep in new fallen snow, and no path fit for walking in was left, this barn was like a great gallery, well suited for that purpose; and furnished with pictures, not unpleasing to a simple and contented mind. As you walked through this long area, looking up, you beheld the abundance of the year treasured above you; on one side the comely heads of your snorting steeds presented themselves arranged in seemly order; on the other, your kine displayed their meeker visages, while the perspective on either, was terminated by heifers and fillies no less interesting. In the midst, your servants exercised the flail; and even, while they threshed out the straw, distributed it to the expectants on both sides; while the "liberal handful" was occasionally thrown to the many colored poultry on the hill. Winter itself never made this abode of life and plenty cold or cheerless. Here you might walk and view all your subjects, and their means of support, at one glance; except, indeed, the sheep, for whom a large and commodious building was erected very near the barn: the roof of which was furnished with a loft large enough to contain hay sufficient for their winter's food.

city and country. They appeared about the middle of April, and having reared two broods during the summer, departed about the third week in August for a warmer winter climate.



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Col. Schuyler's barn was by far the largest I have ever seen: but all of them, in that country, were constructed on the same plan, furnished with the same accommodation, and presented the same cheering aspect. The orchard, as I formerly mentioned, was on the south side of the barn; on the north, a little farther back towards the wood, which formed a dark screen behind this smiling scene, there was an enclosure, in which the remains of the deceased members of the family were deposited. A field of pretty large extent, adjoining to the house on that side, remained uncultivated, and unenclosed; over it were scattered a few large apple trees of a peculiar kind; the fruit of which was never appropriated. This piece of level and productive land, so near the family mansion, and so adapted to various and useful purposes, was never made use of: but left open as a public benefit.

From the known liberality of this munificent family, all Indians, or new settlers, on their journey, whether they came by land or water, rested here. The military, in passing, always formed a camp on this common; and here the Indian wigwams were often planted; here all manner of garden stuff, fruit, and milk, were plentifully distributed to wanderers of all descriptions. Every summer, for many years, there was an encampment, either of regular or provincial troops, on this common: and often when the troops proceeded northward,

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a little colony of helpless women and children, belonging to them, was left in a great measure dependent on the compassion of these worthy patriarchs; for such the brothers might be justly called.

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# Chapter XIX

## MILITARY PREPARATIONS — FIDELITY OF THE MOHAWKS

THE first year of the colonel's marriage was chiefly spent in New York, and in visits to the friends of his bride and other relations. The following years they spent at home; surrounded daily by his brothers, and their families, and other relatives, with whom they maintained the most affectionate intercourse. The colonel, however (as I have called him by anticipation), had, at this time, his mind engaged by public duties of the most urgent nature. He was a member of the colonial assembly; and, by a kind of hereditary right, was obliged to support that character of patriotism, courage, and public wisdom, which had so eminently distinguished his father. The father of Mrs. Schuyler, too, had been long mayor of Albany;[1] at that time an office of great importance: as including, within itself, the entire civil power exercised over the whole settlement as well as the town, and having attached to it a sort of patriarchal authority; for the people, little ac-

[1] He was mayor from 1703 to 1706. His son Johannis Jr., held the office 1742–3.

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quainted with coercion, and by no means inclined to submit to it, had, however, a profound reverence, as is generally the case in the infancy of society, for the families of their first leaders; whom they had looked up to merely as knowing them to possess superior worth, talent and enterprise. In a society, as yet uncorrupted, the value of this rich inheritance can only be diminished by degradation of character, in the representative of a family thus self-ennobled; especially if he be disinterested. This, though apparently a negative quality, being the one of all others that, combined with the higher powers of mind, most engages affection in private and esteem in public life. This is a shield that blunts the shafts which envy never fails to level at the prosperous, even in old establishments; where, from the very nature of things, a thousand obstructions rise in the upward path of merit, and a thousand temptations appear to mislead it from its direct road; and where the rays of opinion are refracted by so many prejudices of contending interests and factions. Still, if any charm can be found to fix that fleeting phantom popularity, this is it; it would be very honorable to human nature, if this could be attributed to the pure love of virtue; but alas! multitudes are not made up of the wise or the virtuous. Yet the very unselfishness of our nature inclines us to love and trust those who are not likely to desire any benefit from us in return for those they confer. Other vices

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may be, if not social, in some degree gregarious: but even the avaricious hate avarice in all but themselves.

Thus, inheriting unstained integrity, unbounded popularity, a cool, determined spirit, and ample possessions, no man had fairer pretensions to unlimited sway, in the sphere in which he moved, than the colonel; but of this, no man could be less desirous. He was too wise and too happy to solicit authority; and yet too public-spirited and too generous to decline it, when any good was to be done or any evil resisted; from which no private benefit resulted to himself.

Young as his wife was, and much as she valued the blessing of their union, and the pleasure of his society, she showed a spirit worthy of a Roman matron; in willingly risking all her happiness, even in that early period of her marriage, by consenting to his assuming a military command; and leading forth the provincial troops against the common enemy; who had now become more boldly dangerous than ever. Not content with secretly stimulating the Indian tribes, who were their allies, and enemies to the Mohawks, to acts of violence, the French Canadians, in violation of existing treaties, began to make incursions on the slightest pretexts. It was no common warfare in which the colonel was about to engage; but the duties of entering on vigorous measures for the defence of the country, became not only obvious but urgent.

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No other person but he had influence enough to produce any cohesion among the people of that district, or any determination, with their own arms and at their own cost, to attack the common enemy. As formerly observed, this had hitherto been trusted to the five confederate Mohawk nations; who, though still faithful to their old friends, had too much sagacity and observation, and indeed too strong a native sense of rectitude to persuade their young warriors to go on venturing their lives in defence of those, who, from their increased power and numbers, were able to defend themselves with the aid of their allies. Add to this, that their possessions were on all sides daily extending; and that they, the Albanians, were carrying their trade for furs, etc., into the deepest recesses of the forests, and towards those great lakes which the Canadians were accustomed to consider as the boundaries of their dominions; and where they had Indians whom they were at great pains to attach to themselves, and to inspire against us and our allies.

Colonel Schuyler's father had held the same rank in a provincial corps formerly: but in his time, there was a profound peace in the district he inhabited; though from his resolute temper, and knowledge of public business, and of the different Indian languages, he was selected to head a regiment raised in the Jerseys and the adjacent bounds, for the defence of the back frontiers of Pennsylvania, New England, etc. Colonel Philip Schuyler was the

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first who raised a corps in the interior of the province of New York; which was not only done by his personal influence, but occasioned him a considerable expense, though the regiment was paid by the province, the province also furnishing arms and military stores; their service being, like that of all provincials, limited to the summer half year.[1]

The governor and chief commander came up to Albany to view and approve the preparations making for this interior war, and to meet the congress of Indian sachems; who on that occasion, renewed their solemn league with their brother the great king. Colonel Schuyler, being then the person they most looked up to and confided in, was their proxy on this occasion in ratifying an engagement to which they ever adhered with singular fidelity. And mutual presents brightened the chain of amity, to use their own figurative language.

The common and the barn, at the Flats, were

[1] After the treaty of Utrecht, 1713, there was peace between England and France about thirty years, during which time their American colonies enjoyed repose. In the meantime the French of Canada built Fort St. Frederick at Crown Point on Lake Champlain, and made other preparations for future hostilities. About 1743, during the war of the Austrian Succession, so called, the colonies were again in arms. Fort St. Frederick was a standing menace to New York and New England, and they organized an army for its capture. Col. Philip Schuyler, commanding the Albany militia, took part in the military preparations for the expedition. His cousin, Col. Peter Schuyler of New Jersey, and not his father, who had been dead several years, commanded a regiment, and was required to defend the frontiers of his state and of Pennsylvania.

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fully occupied, and the hospitable mansion, as was usual on all public occasions, overflowed. There the general, his aid-de-camps, the sachems, and the principal officers of the colonel's regiment, were received; and those who could not find room there of the next class, were accommodated by Peter and Jeremiah. On the common was an Indian encampment: and the barn and orchard were full of the provincials. All these last brought as usual their own food; but were supplied by this liberal family with every production of the garden, dairy, and orchard. While the colonel's judgment was exercised in the necessary regulations for this untried warfare, Mrs. Schuyler, by the calm fortitude she displayed in this trying exigence, by the good sense and good breeding with which she accommodated her numerous and various guests, and by those judicious attentions to family concerns, which, producing order and regularity through every department without visible bustle and anxiety, enable the mistress of a family to add grace and ease to hospitality, showed herself worthy of her distinguished lot.

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# Chapter XX

## A REFRACTORY WARRIOR — THE SPIRIT PERVADING THE NEW ENGLAND PROVINCES

WHILE these preparations were going on, the general [1] [Gov. Shirley] was making every effort of the neighborhood to urge those who had promised assistance, to come forward with their allotted quotas.

On the other side of the river, not very far from the Flats, lived a person whom I shall not name; though his conduct was so peculiar and characteristic of the times, that his anti-heroism is on that sole account worth mentioning. This person lived in great security and abundance, in a place like an earthly paradise, and scarcely knew what it was to have an ungratified wish, having had considerable wealth left to him; and from the simple and domestic habits of his life, had formed no desires beyond it, unless indeed it were the desire of being

[1] The courage, ability and energy of Gov. Shirley were not eminently appreciated in New York. Yet his acts are abundantly recorded in the volumes of the documentary history of that colony. He has found an ardent vindicator in Samuel G. Drake, in the "Particular History of the French and Indian War" (1870), in which his civil and military services are set forth advantageously, and he is characterized as one of the ablest of the colonial governors.

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thought a brave man, which seemed his greatest ambition: he was strong, robust, and an excellent marksman; talked loud, looked fierce, and always expressed the utmost scorn and detestation of cowardice. The colonel applied to him, that his name, and the names of such adherents as he could bring, might be set down in the list of those who were to bring their quota, against a given time, for the general defence; with the request he complied. When the rendezvous came on, this talking warrior had changed his mind, and absolutely refused to appear; the general sent for him, and warmly expostulated on his breach of promise; the bad example, and the disarrangement of plan which it occasioned: the culprit spoke in a high tone, saying, very truly "that the general was possessed of no legal means of coercion; that every one went or staid as they chose; and that his change of opinion on that subject rendered him liable to no penalty whatever." Tired of this sophistry, the enraged general had recourse to club law; and seizing a cudgel, belabored this recreant knight most manfully; while several Indian sachems, and many of his own countrymen and friends, coolly stood by; for the colonel's noted common was the scene of his assault. Our poor neighbor (as he long after became) suffered this dreadful bastinado, unaided and unpitied; and this example, and the subsequent contempt under which he labored (for he was ever after styled captain, and he did not refuse the title), was said to

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have an excellent effect in preventing such retrograde motions in subsequent campaigns.[1] The provincial troops, aided by the faithful Mohawks, performed their duty with great spirit and perseverance. They were, indeed, very superior to the ignorant, obstinate, and mean-souled beings, who, in after times, brought the very name of provincial troops into discredit; and were actuated by no single motive but that of avoiding the legal penalty then affixed to disobedience, and enjoying the pay and provisions allotted to them by the province or the mother country, I cannot exactly say which. Afterwards, when the refuse of mankind were selected, like Falstaff's soldiers, and raised much in the same way, the New York troops still maintained their respectability. This superiority might, without reproaching others, be in some measure accounted for from incidental causes. The four New England provinces were much earlier

[1] Above thirty years after, when the writer of these pages lived with her family at the Flats, the hero of this little tale used very frequently to visit her father, a veteran officer; and being a great talker, war and politics were his incessant topics. There was no campaign or expedition proposed but what he censured and decided on; proposing methods of his own, by which they might have been much better conducted; in short Parolles with his drum was a mere type of our neighbor. Her father long wondered how kindly he took to him, and how a person of so much wealth and eloquence should dwell so obscurely, and shun all the duties of public life; till at length we discovered that he still loved to talk arrogantly of war and public affairs, and pitched upon him for a listener, as the only person he could suppose ignorant of his disgrace. Such is human nature! and so incurable is human vanity!!—*Mrs. Grant.*

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settled, assumed sooner the forms of a civil community, and lived within narrower bounds; they were more laborious; their fanaticism, which they brought from England in its utmost fervor, long continued its effervescence, where there were no pleasures, or indeed lucrative pursuits, to detach their mind from it, and long after that genuine spirit of piety, which, however narrowed and disfigured, was still sincere, had in a great measure evaporated; enough of the pride and rigor of bigotry remained to make them detest and despise the Indian tribes, as ignorant heathen savages. The tribes, indeed, who inhabited their district, had been so weakened by an unsuccessful warfare with the Mohawks, and were so every way inferior to them, that after the first establishment of the colony, and a few feeble attacks successfully repulsed, they were no longer enemies to be dreaded, or friends to be courted. This had an unhappy effect with regard to those provinces; and to the different relations in which they stood with respect to the Indian, some part of the striking difference in the moral and military character of these various establishments must be attributed.

The people of New England left the mother country, as banished from it by what they considered oppression; came over foaming with religious and political fury, and narrowly missed having the most artful and able of demagogues, Cromwell himself, for their leader and guide. They might be

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compared to lava, discharged by the fury of internal combustion, from the bosom of the commonwealth, while inflamed by contending elements. This lava, every one acquainted with the convulsions of nature must know, takes a long time to cool; and when at length it is cooled, turns to a substance hard and barren, that long resists the kindly influence of the elements, before its surface resumes the appearance of beauty and fertility. Such were the almost literal effects of political convulsions, aggravated by a fiery and intolerant zeal for their own mode of worship, on these self-righteous colonists.

These preliminary remarks on the diversity of character in those neighboring provinces lead the way, in the meantime, to a discrimination, the effects of which have become interesting to the whole world.

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# Chapter XXI

## DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NEW YORK COLONISTS — HUGUENOTS AND PALATINES

BUT to return to the superior moral and military character of the New York populace. It was in the first place owing to a well-regulated piety, less concerned about forms than essentials. Next, to an influx of other than the original settlers, which tended to render the general system of opinion more liberal and tolerant. The French protestants, driven from their native land by intolerant bigotry, had lived at home excluded alike from public employments and fashionable society. Deprived of so many resources that were open to their fellow subjects, and forced to seek comfort in piety and concord for many privations, self-command and frugality had been in a manner forced upon them; consequently they were not so vain or so volatile as to disgust their new associates; while their cheerful tempers, accommodating manners, and patience under adversity, were very prepossessing.

These additional inhabitants, being such as had suffered real and extreme hardships for conscience sake, from absolute tyranny and the most cruel intolerance, rejoiced in the free exercise of a pure and

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rational religion, and in the protection of mild and equitable laws, as the first of human blessings; which privation had so far taught them to value, that they thought no exertion too great to preserve them. I should have formerly mentioned, besides the French refugees already spoken of, during the earliest period of the establishment of the British sovereignty in this part of the continent, a great number of the protestants, whom the fury of war and persecution on religious accounts had driven from the Palatinate, during the successful and desolating period of the wars carried on against that unhappy country by Louis the Fourteenth. The subdued and contented spirit, the simple and primitive manners, and frugal, industrious habits of these genuine sufferers for conscience sake, made them an acquisition to any society which received them, and a most suitable infusion among the inhabitants of this province; who, devoted to the pursuits of agriculture and the Indian trade, which encouraged a wild romantic spirit of adventure, little relished those mechanical employments, or that petty yet necessary traffic in shops, etc., to which part of every regulated society must needs devote their attention. These civic toils were left to those patient and industrious exiles; while the friendly intercourse with the original natives had strongly tinctured the first colonists with many of their habits and modes of thinking. Like them, they delighted in hunting; that image of war, which so generally, where

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it is the prevalent amusement, forms the body to athletic force and patient endurance, and the mind to daring intrepidity. It was not alone the timorous deer or feeble hare that were the objects of their pursuit; nor could they in such an impenetrable country attempt to rival the fox in speed or subtlety. When they kept their "few sheep in the wilderness," the she bear, jealous for her young, and the wolf, furious for prey, were to be encountered for their protection. From these allies too, many who lived much among them had learnt that fearless adherence to truth, which exalts the mind to the noblest kind of resolution. The dangers they were exposed to of meeting wandering individuals, or parties of hostile Indians, while traversing the woods in their sporting or commercial adventures, and the necessity that sometimes occurred of defending their families by their own personal prowess, from the stolen irruptions of detached parties of those usually called the French Indians, had also given their minds a warlike bent; and as a boy was not uncommonly trusted at nine or ten years of age with a light fowlingpiece, which he soon learned to use with great dexterity, few countries could produce such dexterous marksmen, or persons so well qualified for conquering those natural obstacles of thick woods and swamps, which would at once baffle the most determined European. It was not only that they were strong of limb, swift of foot, and excellent marksmen — the hatchet was as familiar to



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them as the musket; and an amateur, who had never cut wood but for his diversion, could hew down a tree with a celerity that would astonish and abash a professed wood-cutter in this country; in short, when means or arguments could be used powerful enough to collect a people so uncontrolled and so uncontrollable, and when headed by a leader whom they loved and trusted, so much as they did Col. Schuyler, a well armed body of New York provincials had nothing to dread but an ague or an ambuscade, to both of which they were much exposed on the banks of the lakes, and amidst the swampy forests, through which they had to penetrate in pursuit of an enemy of whom they might say with the Grecian hero, that "they wanted but daylight to conquer him." This first essay in arms of those provincials, under the auspices of their brave and generous leader, succeeded beyond their hopes. This is all I can recollect of it. Of its destination I only know that it was directed against some of those establishments which the French began to make within the British boundaries. The expedition only terminated with the season. The provincials brought home Canadian prisoners, who were kept on their parole in the houses of the three brothers, and became afterwards their friends; and the Five Nations brought home Indian prisoners, most of whom they adopted, and scalps enough to strike awe into the adverse nations, who were for a year or two afterwards pretty quiet.

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# Chapter XXII

## ADOPTION OF CHILDREN COMMON IN THE PROVINCE — MADAME'S VISIT TO NEW YORK

MRS. SCHUYLER had contributed all in her power to forward this expedition: but was probably hurt, either by the fatigue of receiving so many friends, or the anxiety produced by parting with them under such circumstances; for soon after the colonel's departure she was delivered of a dead child, which event was followed by an alarming illness; but she wished the colonel to be kept in ignorance of it, that he might give his undivided attention to the duties in which he was engaged. Providence, which doubtless had singled out this benevolent pair to be the parents of many who had no natural claim upon their affection, did not indulge them with any succeeding prospects of a family of their own. This privation, not a frequent one in this colony, did not chill the minds or narrow the hearts of people, who, from this circumstance, found themselves more at liberty to extend their beneficence, and enlarged that circle which embraced the objects of their love and care. This indeed was not singular during that reign of natural feeling which preceded the prevalence of artificial modes in this

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primitive district. The love of offspring is certainly one of the strongest desires that the uncorrupted mind forms to itself in a state of comparative innocence. Affecting indifference on this subject is the surest proof of a disposition either callous, or led by extreme vanity to pretend insensibility to the best feelings of nature.

To a tie so exquisitely tender, the pledge and bond of connubial union; to that bud of promised felicity, which always cheers with the fragrance of hope the noon-day of toil or care, and often supports with the rich cordial of filial love and watchful duty the evening of our decline, what mind can be indifferent. No wonder the joys of paternity should be highly relished where they were so richly flavored; where parents knew not what it was to find a rebel or a rival in a child; first, because they set the example of simplicity, of moderation, and of seeking their highest joys in domestic life; next, because they quietly expected and calmly welcomed the evening of life; and did not, by an absurd desire of being young too long, inspire their offspring with a premature ambition to occupy their place. What sacrifices have I not seen made to filial piety! How many respectable (though not young) maidens, who without pretending a dislike to marriage, have rejected men whom their hearts approved, because they would not forsake, during her lifetime, a widowed mother, whose sole comfort they were?

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For such children who, that hopes to grow old, would not wish? A consideration which the most polished manners of Europe teach us to banish as far as possible from our minds. We have learned to check this natural sentiment, by finding other objects for those faculties of our minds, which nature intended to bless and benefit creatures born to love us, and to enlarge our affections by exciting them. If this stream, which so naturally inclines to flow downwards, happened to be checked in its course for want of the usual channel, these adepts in the science of happiness immediately formed a new one, and liked their canal as well as a river, because it was of their own making. To speak without a metaphor, whoever wanted a child adopted one; love produced love, and the grafted scion very often proved an ornament and defence to the supporting-stock. But then the scion was generally artless and graceful. This is a part of the manners of my old friends which I always remember with delight; more particularly as it was the invariable custom to select the child of a friend who had a numerous family. The very animals are not devoid of that mixture of affection and sagacity, which suggests a mode of supplying his great desideratum. Next to that prince of cats, the famous cat of Whittington, I would place the cat recorded by Dr. White in his curious natural history, who when deprived of her young, sought a parcel of deserted leverets to suckle and to fondle. What an example!

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The following year produced a suspension of hostilities between the provinces and the Canadians. The colonel went to New York to attend his duty, being again chosen a member of the colonial assembly. Mrs. Schuyler accompanied him; and being improved both in mind and manners since her marriage, which, by giving her a more important part to act, had called forth her powers, she became the centre of a circle by no means inelegant or uninformed; for society was there more various and more polished than in any other part of the continent, both from the mixture of settlers, formerly described, and from its being situated in a province most frequently the seat of war, and consequently forming the head-quarters of the army, which, in point of the birth and education of the candidates for promotion, was on a very different footing from what it has been since. It was then a much narrower range, and the selection more attended to. Unless a man, by singular powers or talent, fought his way from the inferior ranks, there was hardly an instance of a person getting even a subaltern's commission whose birth was not at least genteel, and who had not interest and alliances. There were not so many lucrative places under government. The wide field of adventure since opened in the East was scarcely known; a subaltern's pay was more adequate to the maintenance of a gentleman; and the noblest and most respected families had no other way of providing

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for such younger brothers, as were not bred to any learned profession but by throwing them into the army. As to morals, this did not perhaps much mend the matter. These officers might in some instances be thoughtless, and even profligate, but they were seldom ignorant or low bred; and that rare character called a finished gentleman, was not unfrequently to be found among the higher ranks of them; who had added experience, reading, and reflection to their original stock of talents and attainments.

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# Chapter XXIII

## COLONEL SCHUYLER'S MILITARY PARTIALITY — INDIAN CHARACTER FALSELY CHARGED WITH IDLENESS

IT so happened that a succession of officers, of the description mentioned in the preceding chapter, were to be ordered upon the service which I have been detailing; and whether in New York or at home, they always attached themselves particularly to this family, who, to the attractions of good breeding and easy intelligent conversation, added the power, which they preëminently possessed, of smoothing the way for their necessary intercourse with the independent and self-righted settlers, and instructing them in many things essential to promote the success of the pursuits in which they were about to engage. It was one of Aunt Schuyler's many singular merits, that, after acting for a time a distinguished part in this comparatively refined society, where few were so much admired and esteemed, she could return to the homely good sense and primitive manners of her fellow citizens at Albany, free from fastidiousness and disgust. Few indeed, without study or design, ever better understood the art of being happy, and

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VAN RENSSELAER MANOR HOUSE, BUILT IN 1660

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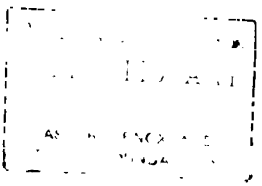

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making others so. Being gay is another sort of thing; gaiety, as the word is understood in society, is too often assumed, artificial, and produced by such an effort, that in the midst of laughter, "the heart is indeed sad." Very different are the smiles that occasionally illume the placid countenance of cheerful tranquillity. They are the emanations of a heart at rest: in the enjoyment of that sunshine of the breast, which is set forever to the restless votaries of mere amusement.

According to the laudable custom of the country they took home a child, whose mother had died in giving her birth, and whose father was a relation of the colonel's. This child's name was either Schuyler or Cuyler, I do not exactly remember which;[1] but I remember her many years after as Mrs. Vander Poolen; when, as a comely contented looking matron, she used to pay her annual visit to her benefactress, and send her ample presents of such rural dainties as her abode afforded. I have often heard her warm in her praises; saying how useful, how modest, and how affectionate she had been; and exulting in her comfortable settlement, and the plain worth, which made her a blessing to her family. From this time to her aunt's death, above fifty years afterwards, her house was never without one, but much oftener two children, whom

[1] Maria, a sister of Aunt Schuyler's husband, married Abraham Staats. They had three children, Peter, Barent and Annatje. Peter died young, and Annatje married Johannes Van der Poel.

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this exemplary pair educated with parental care and kindness. And whenever one of their protégés married out of the house, which was generally at a very early age, she carried with her a female slave, born and baptized in the house, and brought up with a thorough knowledge of her duty, and an habitual attachment to her mistress; besides the usual present of the furniture of a chamber, and a piece of plate, such as a tea-pot, tankard, or some such useful matter, which was more or less valuable as the protégé was more or less beloved: for though Aunt Schuyler had great satisfaction from the characters and conduct of all her adopted, there were, no doubt, degrees of merit among them, of which she was better able to judge than if she had been their actual mother.

There was now an interval of peace, which gave these philanthropists more leisure to do good in their own way. They held a three-fold band of kindness in their hands, by which they led to the desirable purpose of mutual advantage, three very discordant elements, which were daily becoming more difficult to mingle and to rule; and which yet were the more dependent on each other for mutual comfort, from the very causes which tended to disunite them.

In the first place, the Indians began to assume that unfavorable and uncertain aspect, which it is the fate of man to wear in the first steps of his progress from that state where he is a being at once

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warlike and social, having few wants, and being able, without constant labor or division of ranks, to supply them; where there is no distinction, save that attained by superior strength of mind and body; and where there are no laws, but those dictated by good sense, aided by experience, and enforced by affection, this state of life may be truly called the reign of the affections: the love of kindred and of country ruling paramount, unrivalled by other passions, all others being made subservient to these. Vanity, indeed, was in some degree flattered; for people wore ornaments, and were at no small pains to make them. Pride existed: but was differently modified from what we see it; every man was proud of the prowess and achievements of his tribe collectively; of his personal virtues he was not proud, because we excel but by comparison; and he rarely saw instances of the opposite vices in his own nation, and looked on others with unqualified contempt.

When any public benefit was to be obtained, or any public danger to be averted, their mutual efforts were all bent to one end; and no one knew what it was to withhold his utmost aid, nor indeed could in that stage of society have any motive for doing so. Hence, no mind being contracted by selfish cares, the community were but as one large family, who enjoyed or suffered together. We are accustomed to talk, in parrot phrase, of indolent savages; and to be sure, in warm climates, and where the state of man is truly savage, that is to say, unsocial,

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void of virtue and void of comforts, he is certainly an indolent being; but that individual, in a cold climate, who has tasted the sweets of social life, who knows the wants that arise from it, who provides for his children in their helpless state, and where taste and ingenuity are so much improved, that his person is not only clothed with warm and seemly apparel, but decorated with numerous and not inelegant ornaments; which from the scarcity and simplicity of his tools, he has no ready or easy mode of producing: when he has not only found out all these wants, which he has no means of supplying but by his individual strength, dexterity, and ingenuity, industry must be added, ere they can be all regularly gratified. Very active and industrious, in fact, the Indians were in their original state; and when we take it into consideration, that beside all these occupations, together with their long journeys, wars and constant huntings and fishing, their leisure was occupied not only by athletic but studious games, at which they played for days together with unheard of eagerness and perseverance, it will appear they had very little of that lounging time, for which we are so apt to give them credit. Or if a chief occasionally after fatigue, of which we can form no adequate idea, lay silent in the shade, those frisking Frenchmen who have given us most details concerning them, were too restless themselves to subdue their skipping spirits to the recollection, that a Mohawk had no study or arm chair wherein to

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muse and cogitate; and that his schemes of patriotism, his plans of war, and his eloquent speeches, were all like the meditations of Jacques, formed "under the greenwood tree." Neither could any man lounge on his sofa, while half a dozen others were employed in shearing the sheep, preparing the wool, weaving and making his coat, or in planting the flax for his future linen, and flaying the ox for his future shoes; were he to do all this himself, he would have little leisure for study or repose. And all this and more the Indian did, under other names and forms. So that idleness, with its gloomy followers *ennui* and suicide, were unknown among this truly active people: yet that there is a higher state of society cannot be denied; nor can it be denied that the intermediate state is a painful and enfeebling one.

Man, in a state of nature, is taught by his more civilized brethren a thousand new wants before he learns to supply one. Thence barter takes place; which in the first stage of progression is universally fatal to the liberty, the spirit, and the comforts of an uncivilized people.

In the east, where the cradle of our infant nature was appointed, the clime was genial, its productions abundant, and its winters only sufficient to consume the surplus, and give a welcome variety to the seasons. There man was either a shepherd or a hunter, as his disposition led; and that perhaps in the same family. The meek spirit of Jacob delighted in

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tending his father's flocks; while the more daring and adventurous Esau traced the wilds of Mount Seir, in pursuit both of the fiercer animals who waged war upon the fold, and the more timorous who administered to the luxury of the table.

The progress of civilization was here gradual and gentle; and the elegant arts seem to have gone hand in hand with the useful ones. For we read of bracelets and ear-rings sent as tokens of love, and images highly valued and coveted; while even agriculture seemed in its infancy.

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# Chapter XXIV

## PROGRESS OF CIVILIZATION IN EUROPE

POPULATION extending to the milder regions of Europe, brought civilization along with it; so that it is only among the savages (as we call our ancestors of the north) that we can trace the intermediate state I have spoken of. Amongst them, one regular gradation seems to have taken place; they were first hunters and then warriors. As they advanced in their knowledge of the arts of life, and acquired a little property, as much of pastoral pursuits as their rigorous climate would allow, without the aid of regular agriculture, mingled with their wandering habits. But, except in a few partial instances, from hunters they became conquerors: the warlike habits acquired from that mode of life raising their minds above patient industry, and teaching them to despise the softer arts that embellish society. In fine, their usual process was to pass to civilization through the medium of conquest. The poet says,

> "With noble scorn the first fam'd Cato viewed
> Rome learning arts from Greece which she subdued."

The surly censor might have spared his scorn, for doubtless science, and the arts of peace were by

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far the most valuable acquisitions resulting from their conquest of that polished and ingenious people. But when the savage hunters of the north became too numerous to subsist on their deer and fish, and too warlike to dread the conflict with troops more regularly armed, they rushed down, like a cataract, on their enfeebled and voluptuous neighbors; destroyed the monuments of art, and seemed for a time to change the very face of nature. Yet dreadful as were the devastations of this flood, let forth by divine vengeance to punish and to renovate, it had its use in sweeping away the hoarded mass of corruption with which the dregs of mankind had polluted the earth. It was an awful, but a needful process; which, in some form or other, is always renewed when human degeneracy has reached its ultimatum. The destruction of these feeble beings, who, lost to every manly and virtuous sentiment, crawl about the rich property which they have not sense to use worthily, or spirit to defend manfully, may be compared to the effort nature makes to rid herself of the noxious brood of wasps and slugs, cherished by successive mild winters. A dreadful frost comes; man suffers, and complains; his subject animals suffer more, and all his works are for a time suspended: but this salutary infliction purifies the air, meliorates the soil and destroys millions of lurking enemies, who would otherwise have consumed the productions of the earth, and deformed the face of nature. In these barbarous irruptions,

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the monuments of art, statues, pictures, temples, and palaces, seem to be most lamented. From age to age the virtuosi of every country have reëchoed to each other their feeble plaints over the lost works of art; as if that had been the heaviest sorrow in the general wreck; and as if the powers that produced them had ceased to exist. It is over the defaced image of the divine Author, and not merely the mutilated resemblance of his creatures, that the wise and virtuous should lament! We are told that in Rome there were as many statues as men: had all these lamented statues been preserved would the world be much wiser or happier? a sufficient number remain as models to future statuaries, and memorials of departed art and genius. Wealth, directed by taste and liberality, may be much better employed in calling forth, by due encouragement, that genius which doubtless exists among our cotemporaries, than in paying exorbitantly the vender of fragments.

> "Mind, mind alone, bear witness earth and heav'n!
> The living fountains in itself contains
> Of beauteous and sublime."

And what has mind achieved, that, in a favorable conjuncture, it might not again aspire to? The lost arts are ever the theme of classical lamentation; but the great and real evil was the loss of the virtues which protected them; of courage, fortitude, honor, and patriotism; in short, of the whole manly char-



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acter. This must be allowed, after the dreadful tempest of subversion was over, to have been in some degree restored in the days of chivalry: and it is equally certain that the victors learnt from the vanquished many of the arts that support life, and all those which embellish it. When their manners were softened by the aid of a mild and charitable religion, this blended people assumed that undefined power, derived from superior valor and superior wisdom, which has so far exalted Europe over all the regions of the earth. Thus, where a bold and warlike people subdue a voluptuous and effeminate one, the result is, in due time, an improvement of national character. In similar climes and circumstances to those of the primeval nations in the other hemisphere, the case has been very different. There, too, the hunter, by the same gradation became a warrior; but first allured by the friendship which sought his protection; then repelled by the art that coveted and encroached on his territories; and lastly by the avarice that taught him new wants, and then took an undue advantage of them; they neither wished for our superfluities, nor envied our mode of life; nor did our encroachments much disturb them, as they receded into their trackless coverts as we approached from the coast. But though they scorned our refinements; and though our government, and all the enlightened minds amongst us, dealt candidly and generously with all such as were not set on by our enemies to injure us, the blight

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of European vices, the mere consequence of private greediness and fraud, proved fatal to our very friends. As I formerly observed, the nature of the climate did not admit of the warriors passing through the medium of a shepherd's life to the toils of agriculture. The climate, though extremely warm in summer, was so severe in winter, and that winter was so long, that it required no little labor to secure the food for the animals which were to be maintained; and no small expense in that country to procure the implements necessary for the purpose of agriculture. In other countries, when a poor man has not wherewithal to begin farming, he serves another; and the reward of his toil enables him to set up for himself. No such resource was open to the Indians, had they even inclined to adopt our modes. No Indian ever served another, or received assistance from any one except his own family. 'T is inconceivable, too, what a different kind of exertion of strength it requires to cultivate the ground, and to endure the fatigues of the chase, long journeys, etc. To all that induces us to labor they were indifferent. When a governor of New York was describing to an Indian the advantages that some one would derive from such and such possessions; "Why," said he, with evident surprise, "should any man desire to possess more than he uses?" More appeared to his untutored sense an incumbrance.

I have already observed how much happier they

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considered their manner of living than ours; yet their intercourse with us daily diminished their independence, their happiness, and even their numbers. In the new world this fatality has never failed to follow the introduction of European settlers; who, instead of civilizing and improving, slowly consume and waste; where they do not, like the Spaniards, absolutely destroy and exterminate the natives. The very nature of even our most friendly mode of dealing with them was pernicious to their moral welfare; which, though too late, they well understood, and could as well explain. Untutored man, in beginning to depart from that life of exigencies, in which the superior acuteness of his senses, his fleetness and dexterity in the chase, are his chief dependence, loses so much of all this before he can become accustomed to, or qualified for our mode of procuring food by patient labor, that nothing can be conceived more enfeebled and forlorn than the state of the few detached families remaining of vanished tribes, who having lost their energy, and even the wish to live in their own manner, were slowly and reluctantly beginning to adopt ours. It was like that suspension of life which takes place in the chrysalis of insects, while in their progress towards a new state of being. Alas! the indolence with which we reproach them, was merely the consequence of their commercial intercourse with us; and the fatal passion for strong liquors which resulted from it. As the fabled

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enchanter, by waving his magic wand, chains up at once the faculties of his opponents, and renders strength and courage useless; the most wretched and sordid trader, possessed of this master-key to the appetites and passions of these hard-fated people, could disarm those he dealt with of all their resources, and render them dependent — nay dependent on those they scorned and hated. The process was simple; first, the power of sending, by mimic thunder, an unseen death to a distant foe, which filled the softer inhabitants of the southern regions with so much terror, was here merely an object of desire and emulation; and so eagerly did they adopt the use of fire-arms, that they soon became less expert in using their own missile weapons. They could still throw the tomahawk with such an unerring aim, that, though it went circling through the air towards its object, it never failed to reach it. But the arrows, on which they had formerly so much depended, were now considered merely as the weapons of boys, and only directed against birds.

Thus was one strong link forged in the chain of dependence; next, liquor became a necessity, and its fatal effects who can detail! But to make it still clearer, I have mentioned the passion for dress, in which all the pride and vanity of this people were centred. In former days this had the best effect, in being a stimulus to industry. The provision requisite for making a splendid appear-

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ance at the winter meetings for hunting and the national congress, occupied the leisure hours of the whole summer. The beaver skins of the last year's hunting were to be accurately dressed, and sewed together, to form that mantle which was as much valued, and as necessary to their consequence, as the pelice of sables to that of an eastern bashaw. A deer skin, or that of a bear, or beaver, had their stated price. The boldest and most expert hunter had most of these commodities to spare, and was therefore most splendidly arrayed. If he had a rival, it was in him whose dexterous ingenuity in fabricating the materials of which his own dress was composed, enabled him to vie with the hero of the chase.

Thus superior elegance in dress was not, as with us, the distinction of the luxurious and effeminate, but the privilege and reward of superior courage and industry; and became an object worthy of competition. Thus employed, and thus adorned, the sachem or his friends found little time to indulge the stupid indolence we have been accustomed to impute to them.

Another arduous task remains uncalculated: before they became dependent on us for the means of destruction, much time was consumed in forming their weapons; in the construction of which no less patience and ingenuity were exercised than in that of their ornaments: and those too were highly embellished, and made with great labor out

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of flints, pebbles and shells. But all this system of employment was soon overturned by their late acquaintance with the insidious arts of Europe; to the use of whose manufactures they were insensibly drawn in, first by their passion for fire-arms, and finally by their fatal appetite for liquor. To make this more clear, I shall insert a dialogue, such as, if not literally, at least in substance, might pass betwixt an Indian warrior and a trader.

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# Chapter XXV

## INDEPENDENCE OF THE INDIANS HOW FIRST DIMINISHED

*INDIAN.* — Brother, I am come to trade with you; but I forewarn you to be more moderate in your demands than formerly.

*Trader.* — Why, brother, are not my goods of equal value with those you had last year?

*Indian.* — Perhaps they may; but mine are more valuable because more scarce. The great spirit who has withheld from you strength and ability to provide food and clothing for yourselves, has given you cunning and art to make guns and provide scaura;[1] and by speaking smooth words to simple men, when they have swallowed madness, you have by little and little purchased their hunting grounds, and made them corn lands. Thus the beavers grow more scarce, and deer flies farther back; yet after I have reserved skins for my mantle, and the clothing of my wife, I will exchange the rest.

*Trader.* — Be it so, brother: I came not to wrong you, or take your furs against your will. It is true the beavers are few, and you go further for them. Come, brother, let us deal fair first, and smoke

[1] Scaura is the Indian name for rum. — *Mrs. Grant.*

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friendly afterwards. Your last gun cost fifty beaver skins; you shall have this for forty; and you shall give marten and racoon skins in the same proportion for powder and shot.

*Indian.* — Well, brother, that is equal. Now for two silver bracelets, with long pendant ear-rings of the same, such as you sold to Cardarani in the sturgeon[1] month last year, how much will you demand?

*Trader.* — The skins of two deer for the bracelets, and those of two fawns for the ear-rings.

*Indian.* — That is a great deal; but wampum grows scarce, and silver never rusts. Here are the skins.

*Trader.* — Do you buy any more? Here are knives, hatchets, and beads of all colors.

*Indian.* — I will have a knife and a hatchet; but must not take more; the rest of the skins will be little enough to clothe the women and children, and buy wampum. Your beads are of no value, no warrior who has slain a wolf will wear them.[2]

*Trader.* — Here are many things good for you, which you have not skins to buy; here is a looking-glass, and here is a brass kettle, in which your

[1] The Indians appropriate a month to catch fish or animals, which is at that time the predominant object of pursuit; as the bear month, the beaver month, etc. — *Mrs. Grant.*

[2] Indians have a great contempt, comparatively, for the beads we send them; which they consider as only fit for those plebeians who cannot by their exertions win any better. They estimate them compared with their own wampum, as we do pearls compared with paste. — *Mrs. Grant.*

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woman may boil her maize, her beans, and above all her maple sugar. Here are silver broaches, and here are pistols for the youths.

*Indian.* — The skins I can spare will not purchase them.

*Trader.* — Your will determines, brother; but next year you will want nothing but powder and shot, having already purchased your gun and ornaments. If you will purchase from me a blanket to wrap round you, a shirt and blue stroud for under garments to yourself and your woman; and the same for leggings, this will pass the time, and save you the great labor of dressing the skins, making the thread, etc., for your clothing; which will give you more fishing and shooting time, in the sturgeon and bear months.

*Indian.* — But the custom of my fathers!

*Trader.* — You will not break the custom of your fathers, by being thus clad for a single year. They did not refuse those things which were never offered to them.

*Indian.* — For this year, brother, I will exchange my skins; in the next I shall provide apparel more befitting a warrior. One pack alone I will reserve to dress for a future occasion. The summer must not find a warrior idle.

The terms being adjusted and the bargain concluded, the trader thus shows his gratitude for liberal dealing.

*Trader.* — Corlaer has forbid bringing scaura to

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steal away the wisdom of the warriors; but we white men are weak and cold; we bring kegs for ourselves, lest death arise from the swamps. We will not sell scaura; but you shall taste some of ours in return for the venison with which you have feasted us.

*Indian.* — Brother, we will drink moderately.

A bottle was then given to the warrior by way of present, which he was advised to keep long; but found it irresistible. He soon returned with the reserved pack of skins, earnestly urging the trader to give him beads, silver broaches, and above all scaura, to their full amount. This, with much affected reluctance at parting with the private stock, was at last yielded. The warriors now, after giving loose for a while to frantic mirth, began the war-whoop, made the woods resound with infuriate howlings; and having exhausted their dear bought draught, probably determined, in contempt of that probity which at all other times they rigidly observed, to plunder the instrument of their pernicious gratification. He, well aware of the consequences, took care to remove himself and his goods to some other place; and a renewal of the same scene ensued. Where, all this time, were the women, whose gentle counsels might have prevented these excesses? Alas! unrestrained by that delicacy which is certainly one of the best fruits of refinement, they shared in them, and sunk sooner under them. A long and deep sleep generally succeeded; from which they awoke in a state of dejec-

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tion and chagrin, such as no Indian had ever experienced under any other circumstance. They felt as Milton describes Adam and Eve to have done after their transgression. Exhausted and forlorn, and stung with the consciousness of error and dependence, they had neither the means nor the desire of exercising their wonted summer occupations with spirit. Vacancy produced languor, and languor made them again wish for the potion which gave temporary cheerfulness.[1] They carried their fish to the next fort or habitation to barter for rum. This brought on days of frenzy, succeeded by torpor. When again roused by want to exertion, they saw the season passing without the usual provision; and by an effort of persevering industry, tried to make up for past negligence; and then, worn out by exertion, sunk into supine indolence, till the approach of winter called them to hunt the bear; and the arrival of that (their busy season), urged on their distant excursions in pursuit of deer. Then they resumed their wonted character, and became what they used to be; but conscious that acquired tastes and wants, which they had lost the habit of supplying themselves, would throw them again on the traders for clothing, etc., they were themselves out-straining every sinew to procure enough of peltry to answer their purpose, and to gratify their newly acquired appetites. Thus the energy, both

[1] From Peter Schuyler, brother to the colonel, I have heard many such details. — *Mrs. Grant.*

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of their characters and constitutions, was gradually undermined; and their numbers as effectually diminished, as if they had been wasted by war.

The small-pox was also so fatal to them, that whole tribes on the upper lakes have been entirely extinguished by it. Those people being in the habit of using all possible means of closing the pores of the skin, by painting and anointing themselves with bears' grease, to defend them against the extremity of cold, to which their manner of life exposed them; and not being habitually subject to any cutaneous disease, the small-pox rarely rises upon them; from which it may be understood how little chance they had of recovering. All this I heard Aunt Schuyler relate, whose observations and reflections I merely detail.

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# Chapter XXVI

## ATTRACTIONS OF THE INDIAN MODE OF LIFE —ACCOUNT OF A SETTLER AMONG THEM

IN this wild liberty, habits of probity, mutual confidence, and constant variety, there was an undefinable charm, that, while they preserved their primitive manners, wrought in every one who dwelt for any time amongst them.

I have often heard my friend speak of an old man, who, being carried away in his infancy by some hostile tribe who had slain his parents, was rescued very soon after by a tribe of friendly Indians, who, from motives of humanity, resolved to bring him up among themselves, that he might, in their phrase, "learn to bend the bow, and speak truth." When it was discovered, some years after, that he was still living, his relations claimed him; and the community wished him to return and inherit his father's lands, now become more considerable. The Indians were unwilling to part with their protégé; and he was still more reluctant to return. This was considered as a bad precedent; the early settlers having found it convenient in several things regarding hunting, food, etc., to assimilate, in some degree, with the Indians; and the young men occa-

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sionally, at that early period, joining their hunting and fishing parties. It was considered as a matter of serious import to reclaim this young alien; lest others should be lost to the community and to their religion by following his example. With difficulty they forced him home; where they never could have detained him, had they not carefully and gradually inculcated into his mind the truths of Christianity. To those instructions even his Indian predilections taught him to listen; for it was the religion of his fathers, and venerable to him as such: still, however, his dislike of our manners was never entirely conquered, nor was his attachment to his foster fathers ever much diminished. He was possessed of a very sound intellect, and used to declaim with the most vehement eloquence against our crafty and insidious encroachments on our old friends. His abhorrence of the petty falsehoods to which custom has too well reconciled us, and those little artifices which we all occasionally practise, rose to a height fully equal to that felt by Gulliver. Swift and this other misanthrope, though they lived at the same time, could not have had any intercourse, else one might have supposed the invectives which he has put into the mouth of Gulliver, were borrowed from this demi-savage; whose contempt and hatred of selfishness, meanness, and duplicity, were expressed in language worthy of the dean. Insomuch, that years after I had heard of this singular character, I thought, on reading Gulliver's asperities

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after returning from Houyhnhnmland, that I had met my old friend again. One really does meet with characters that fiction would seem too bold in portraying. This original had an aversion to liquor, which amounted to abhorrence; being embittered by his regret at the mischief resulting from it to his old friends, and rage at the traders for administering the means of depravity. He never could bear any seasoning to his food; and despised luxury in all its forms.

For all the growing evils I have been describing, there was only one remedy, which the sagacity of my friend and her other self soon discovered; and their humanity as well as principle led them to try all possible means of administering. It was the pure light and genial influence of Christianity alone that could cheer and ameliorate the state of these people, now, from a concurrence of circumstances scarcely to be avoided in the nature of things, deprived of the independence habitual to their own way of life, without acquiring in its room any of those comforts which sweeten ours. By gradually and gently unfolding to them the views of a happy futurity, and the means by which depraved humanity was restored to a participation of that blessing; pride, revenge, and the indulgence of every excess of passion or appetite being restrained by the precepts of a religion ever powerful where it is sincere; their spirits would be brought down from the fierce pride which despises improvement to adopt such of our

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modes, as would enable them to incorporate in time with our society, and procure for themselves a comfortable subsistence, in a country no longer adapted to supply the wants of the houseless rangers of the forest.

The narrow policy of many looked coldly on this benevolent project. Hunters supplied the means of commerce, and warriors those of defence; and it was questionable whether a Christian Indian would hunt or fight as well as formerly. This, however, had no power with those in whom Christianity was any thing more than a name. There were already many Christian Indians; and it was very encouraging, that not one, once converted, had ever forsaken the strict profession of their religion, or ever, in a single instance, abandoned themselves to the excesses so pernicious to their unconverted brethren. Never was the true spirit of Christianity more exemplified than in the lives of those comparatively few converts, who about this time amounted to more than two hundred. But the tender care and example of the Schuylers coöperating with the incessant labors of a judicious and truly apostolic missionary, some years after greatly argumented their numbers in different parts of the continent: and to this day, the memory of David Brainard, the faithful laborer alluded to, is held in veneration in those districts that were blessed with his ministry. He did not confine it to one people or province, but travelled from place to place to disseminate the gos-



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pel to new converts, and confirm and cherish the truth already planted. The first foundation of that church had, however, as I formerly mentioned, been laid long ago: and the examples of piety, probity, and benevolence set by the worthies at the Flats, and a few more, were a very necessary comment on the doctrines to which their assent was desired.

The great stumbling block which the missionaries had to encounter with the Indians (who, as far as their knowledge went, argued with great acuteness and logical precision), was the small influence which our religion seemed to have over many of its professors. "Why," said they, "if the book of truth, that shows the way to happiness, and bids all men do justice, and love one another, is given both to Corlaer and Onnonthio,[1] does it not direct them both in the same way? Why does Onnonthio worship, and Corlaer neglect, the mother of the blessed one? And why do the missionaries blame those for worshiping things made with hands, while the priests tell the praying nation,[2] that Corlaer and his people have forsaken the worship of his forefathers: besides, how can people, who believe that God and good spirits view and take an interest in

[1] Corlaer was the title given by them to the governor of New York; and was figuratively used for the governed, and Onnonthio for those of Canada, in the same manner. — *Mrs. Grant.*

[2] Praying nation was a name given to a village of Indians near Montreal, who professed the Roman catholic faith. — *Mrs. Grant.*

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all their actions, cheat and dissemble, drink and fight, quarrel and backbite, if they believe the great fire burns for those who do such things? If we believed what you say, we should not exchange so much good for wickedness, to please an evil spirit who would rejoice at our destruction." . . . . To this reasoning it was not easy to oppose any thing that would carry conviction to untutored people, who spoke from observation and the evidence of the senses; to which could only be opposed scripture texts, which avail not till they are believed; and abstract reasoning, extremely difficult to bring to the level of an unlearned understanding. Great labor and perseverance wrought on the minds of a few, who felt conviction, as far as it is to be ascribed to human agency, flow from the affectionate persuasions of those whom they visibly beheld earnest for their eternal welfare; and when a few had thus yielded,[1] the peace and purity of their lives, and the sublime enjoyment they seemed to derive from the prospects their faith opened into futurity, was an inducement to others to follow the same path.

[1] Some of them have made such a proficiency in practical religion as ought to shame many of us, who boast the illuminating aids of our native Christianity. Not one of these Indians has been concerned in those barbarous eruptions which deluged the frontiers of our south-western provinces with the blood of so many innocents, of every age and sex. At the commencement of these ravages, they flew into the settlements, and put themselves into the protection of government. The Indians no sooner became Christians, than they openly professed their loyalty to King George; and therefore, to contribute to their conversion was as truly politic as nobly Christian. — *Mrs. Grant.*

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This, abstractedly from religious considerations of endless futurity, is the true and only way to civilization; and to the blending together the old and new inhabitants of these regions. National pride, rooted prejudices, ferocity and vindictive hatred, all yield before a change that new-moulds the whole soul, and furnishes men with new fears and hopes, and new motives for action.

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# Chapter XXVII

## INDIANS ATTACHED BY CONVERSION — EXPEDITION OF MONS. BARRE — IRONICAL SKETCH OF AN INDIAN

UPON the attachment the Indians had to our religion was grafted the strongest regard to our government, and the greatest fidelity to the treaties made with us. I shall insert a specimen of Indian eloquence, illustrative of this last; not that I consider it by any means so rich, impressive, or sublime as many others that I could quote, but as containing a figure of speech rarely to be met with among savage people, and supposed by us incompatible with the state of intellectual advancement to which they have attained. I mean a fine and well supported irony. About the year 1696,[1] Mons. Barre, the commander of the French forces in Canada, made a kind of inroad, with a warlike

[1] De la Barre made an attempt to invade the Seneca country in 1684. He crossed Lake Ontario from Fort Frontenac (Kingston) and landed in the country of the Onondagas, some distance east of Oswego. The Indian sachems visited him, and after seeing his hopeless condition with an army wasted and dying, they made him an ironical speech, as seen on page 154. He was recalled the following year. In 1696 the Count de Frontenac made war on the Onondaga nation, and destroyed their village.

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design, into the precincts claimed by our Mohawk allies; the march was tedious, the French fell sick, and many of their Indians deserted them. The wily commander, finding himself unequal to the meditated attack, and that it would be unsafe to return through the lakes and woods, while in hourly danger of meeting enemies so justly provoked, sent to invite the sachems to a friendly conference: and, when they met, asserted, in an artful speech, that he and his troops had come with the sole intention of settling old grievances, and smoking the calumet of peace with them. The Indians, not imposed on by such pretences, listened patiently to his speech, and then made the answer which the reader will find in the notes.[1] It is to be observed, that who-

[1] "Onnonthio, I honor you; and all the warriors that are with me likewise honor you. Your interpreter has finished his speech, I begin mine. My words make haste to reach your ears; hearken to them, Yonnondio. You must have believed, when you left Quebec, that the sun had burnt up all the forests which made our country so inaccessible to the French; or that the lakes had so far overflowed their banks, that they had surrounded our castles, and that it was impossible for us to get out of them. Yes, Yonnondio, surely you have dreamt so; and the curiosity of seeing so great a wonder has brought you so far. Now you are undeceived, since I and the warriors here present are come to assure you, that the Hurons, Onondagoes, and Mohawks are yet alive. I thank you in their name for bringing back into their country the calumet, which your predecessor received from their hands. It was happy for you that you left under ground that murdering hatchet, which has been so often dyed with the blood of the French. Hear, Onnonthio, I do not sleep; I have my eyes open; and the sun that enlightens me discovers to me a great captain, at the head of his soldiers, who speaks as if he were dreaming. He says that he only came to the lake to smoke out of the great calumet with the Five Nations; but Connaratego says that he sees the contrary; that it was

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ever they considered as the ruling person for the time being in Canada, they styled Onnonthio;

to knock them on the head, if sickness had not weakened the arms of the French. I see Onnonthio raving in a camp of sick men, whose lives the great spirit has saved by inflicting this sickness upon them. Hear, Onnonthio, our women had taken their clubs; our children and old men had carried their bows and arrows into the heart of your camp, if our warriors had not disarmed them, and kept them back, when your messenger came to our castles. It is done, and I have said it. Hear, Yonnondio, we plundered none of the French, but those who carried guns, powder, and ball to the wolf and elk tribes, because those arms might have cost us our lives. Herein we follow the example of the Jesuits, who stave all the kegs of rum brought to the castles where they are, lest the drunken Indians should knock them on the head. Our warriors have not beavers enough to pay for all those arms that they have taken; and our old men are not afraid of the war. This belt preserves my words. We carried the English into our lakes, to trade with the wolf and elk tribes, as the praying Indians brought the French to our castles, to carry on a trade, which the English say is theirs. We are born free. We neither depend on Onnonthio nor Corlaer; we may go where we please. If your allies be your slaves, use them as such; command them to receive no other but your people. This belt preserves my words. We knocked the Connecticut Indians and their confederates on the head because they had cut down the trees of peace, which were the limits of our country. They had hunted beavers on our lands, contrary to the customs of all Indians, for they have left none alive. They have killed both male and female. They brought the Sathanas into our country to take part with them, after they had formed ill designs against us; we have done less than they merited.

"Hear, once more, the words of the Five Nations. They say that when they buried the hatchet at Cardaraqui (in the presence of your predecessor), in the middle of the fort [Detroit], they planted the tree of peace in the same place, to be there carefully preserved; that instead of an abode for soldiers, that fort might be a rendezvous for merchants; that in place of arms and ammunition, only peltry and goods should enter there.

"Hear, Yonnondio, take care for the future that so great a number of soldiers as appear there do not choke the tree of peace, planted in so small a fort. It will be a great loss after having so easily taken root,

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while the governor of New York they always called Corlaer.

Twice in the year the new converts came to Albany to partake of the sacrament, before a place of worship was erected for themselves. They always spent the night, or oftener two nights, before their joining in this holy rite at the Flats: which was their general rendezvous from different quarters. There they were cordially received by the three brothers, who always met together at this time to have a conference with them on subjects the most

if you should stop its growth, and prevent its covering your country and ours with its branches. I assure you, in the name of the Five Nations, that our warriors shall dance to the calumet of peace under its leaves, and shall remain quiet on their mats; and that they shall never dig up the hatchet till Corlaer or Onnonthio, either jointly or separately attack the country which the great spirit had given to our ancestors. This belt preserves my words, and this other the authority which the Five Nations have given me." Then, Garangula, addressing himself to Mons. de Main, who understood his language, and interpreted, spoke thus: "Take courage, friend, you have spirits; speak, explain my words, omit nothing. Tell all that your brethren and friends say to Onnonthio, your governor, by the mouth of Garangula, — who loves you, and desires you to accept of this present of beaver, and take part with me in my feast, to which I invite you. This present of beaver is sent to Yonnondio on the part of the Five Nations."

Mons. Barre returned to his fort much enraged at what he had heard; Garangula feasted the French officers, and then went home; and Mons. Barre set out on his way towards Montreal; and as soon as the general, with the few soldiers that remained in health, had embarked, the militia made their way to their own habitations without order or discipline. Thus a chargeable and fatiguing expedition meant to strike the terror of the French name into the stubborn hearts of the Five Nations, ended in a scold between a French general and an old Indian. — *Colden's History of the Five Nations*, page 68.

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important to their present and future welfare. These devout Indians seemed all impressed with the same feelings, and moved by the same spirit. They were received with affectionate cordiality, and accommodated in a manner quite conformable to their habits, in the passage, porch, and offices; and so deeply impressed were they with a sense of the awful duty that brought them there, and the rights of friendship and hospitality, and at this period become so much acquainted with our customs, that though two hundred communicants, followed by many of their children, were used to assemble on these occasions, the smallest instance of riot or impropriety was not known amongst them. They brought little presents of game, or of their curious handicrafts, and were liberally and kindly entertained by their good brother Philip, as they familiarly called him. In the evening they all went apart to secret prayer; and in the morning, by dawn of day, they assembled before the portico; and their entertainers, who rose early to enjoy, unobserved, a view of their social devotion, beheld them with their mantles drawn over their heads, prostrate on the earth, offering praises and fervent supplications to their Maker. After some time spent in this manner, they arose, and seated in a circle on the ground, with their heads veiled as formerly, they sang an hymn, which it was delightful to hear, from the strength, richness, and sweet accord of their uncommonly fine voices; which

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every one that ever heard this sacred chorus, however indifferent to the purport of it, praised as incomparable. The voices of the female Indians are particularly sweet and powerful. I have often heard my friend dwell with singular pleasure on the recollection of those scenes, and of the conversations she and the colonel used to hold with the Indians, whom she described as possessed of very superior powers of understanding; and in their religious views and conversations, uniting the ardor of proselytes with the firm decision and inflexible steadiness of their national character. It was on the return of those new Christians to the Flats, after they had thus solemnly sealed their profession, that these wise regulations for preserving peace and good will between the settlers (now become confident and careless from their numbers) and the Indians, jealous with reason of their ancient rites, were concluded.

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# Chapter XXVIII

## CHRISTIAN INDIANS — THEIR INFLUENCE WITH THE MOHAWKS

THE influence these converts had obtained over the minds of those most venerated for wisdom among their countrymen, was the medium through which this patriot family, in some degree, controlled the opinions of that community at large, and kept them faithful to the British interests. Every two or three years there was a congress held, by deputies from New York, who generally spoke to the Indians by an interpreter; went through the form of delivering presents from their brother the great king, redressing petty grievances, smoking the calumet of peace, and delivering belts, the pledges of amity. But these were mere public forms: the real terms of this often renewed amity having been previously digested by those who far better understood the relations subsisting between the contracting parties, and the causes most likely to interrupt their union. Colonel Schuyler, though always ready to serve his country in exigencies, did not like to take upon himself any permanent responsibility, as a superintendent of Indian affairs, as it might have diminished that private influence which

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arose from the general veneration for his character, and from a conviction that the concern he took was voluntary and impartial; neither did he choose to sacrifice that domestic peace and leisure, which he so well knew how to turn to the best account, being convinced that by his example and influence, as a private gentleman, he had it in his power to do much good of a peculiar kind, which was incompatible with the weight and bustle of public affairs, or with that hospitality which, as they managed it, was productive of so many beneficial effects. I have already shown how, by prudent address and kind conciliation, this patriotic pair soothed and attached the Indians to the British interest. As the country grew more populous, and property more abundant and more secure, the face of society in this inland region began to change. They whose quiet and orderly demeanor, devotion, and integrity did not much require the enforcement of laws, began now to think themselves above them. To a deputed authority, the source of which lay beyond the Atlantic, they paid little deference; and from their neighbors of New Hampshire and Connecticut, who bordered on their frontiers, and served with them in the colonial wars, they had little to learn of loyalty or submission. These people they held in great contempt, both as soldiers and statesmen; and yet, from their frequent intercourse with those who talked of law and politics in their peculiar uncouth dialect incessantly, they

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insensibly adopted many of their notions. There is a certain point of stable happiness at which our imperfect nature merely seems to arrive; for the very materials of which it is formed contain the seeds of its destruction. This was the case here: that peaceful and desirable equality of conditions, from which so many comforts resulted, in process of time occasioned an aversion to superiors, to whom they were not accustomed, and an exaggerated jealousy of the power which was exercised for their own safety and comfort. Their manners unsophisticated, and their morals in a great measure uncorrupted, led them to regard with unjustifiable scorn and aversion those strangers who brought with them the manners of more polished, though less pure, communities. Proud of their haughty bluntness, which daily increased with their wealth and security, they began to consider respectful and polite behavior as a degree of servility and duplicity; while they revolted at the power exercised over themselves, and very reluctantly made the exertions necessary for their own protection, they showed every inclination to usurp the territories of their Indian allies; and use to the very utmost the power they had acquired over them, by supplying their wants.

At the liberal table of Aunt Schuyler, where there was always intelligence, just notions, and good breeding to be met with, both among the owners and their guests, many had their prejudices softened

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down, their minds enlarged, and their manners improved. There they met British officers of rank and merit, and persons in authority; and learnt that the former were not artificial coxcombs, nor the latter petty tyrants, as they would otherwise be very apt to imagine. Here they were accustomed to find authority respected on the one hand, and on the other to see the natural rights of man vindicated, and the utmost abhorrence expressed of all the sophistry by which the credulous were misled by the crafty, to have a code of morality for their treatment of heathens, different from that which directed them in their dealing with Christians. Here a selection of the best and worthiest, of the different characters and classes we have been describing, met; and were taught, not only to tolerate, but to esteem each other; and it required the calm, temperate wisdom, and easy versatile manners of my friend to bring this about. It is, when they are called to act in a new scene, and among people different from any they had known or imagined, that the folly of the wise and the weakness of the strong become discernable.

Many officers justly esteemed, possessed of capacity, learning, and much knowledge, both of the usages of the world, and the art of war, from the want of certain habitudes, which nothing but experience can teach, were disqualified for the warfare of the woods; and from a secret contempt with which they regarded the blunt simplicity and plain appear-

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THE GREAT FALLS OF THE MOHAWK RIVER, CALLED COHOES FALLS

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ance of the settlers, were not amenable to their advice on these points. They were not aware how much they were to depend on them for the means of carrying on their operations; and by rude or negligent treatment so disgusted them, that they withheld the horses, oxen, wagons, etc., which were to be paid for, merely to show their independence; well knowing the dreaded and detested military power, even if coercive measures were resorted to, would have no chance for redress in their courts; and even the civil authorities were cautious of doing any thing so unpopular as to decide in favor of the military. Thus, till properly instructed, those bewildered strangers were apt to do the thing of all others that annihilates a feeble authority; threaten where they could not strike, and forfeit respect where they could not enforce obedience: a failure of this kind clogged and enfeebled all their measures; for without the hearty coöperation of the inhabitants in furnishing prerequisites, nothing could go on in a country without roads, or public vehicles, for the conveyance of their warlike stores. Another rock they were apt to run upon was, a neglect of the Indians, whom they neither sufficiently feared as enemies, nor valued as friends: till taught to do so by maturer judgments. Of this, Braddock's defeat was an instance; he was brave, experienced, and versed in all military science: his confidence in which, occasioned the destruction of himself and his army. He considered those counsels that warned

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him, how little manœuvres or numbers would avail in the close prison of innumerable boughs, as the result of feeble caution; and marched his army to certain ruin, in the most brave and scientific manner imaginable. Upon certain occasions there is no knowledge so valuable as that of our own ignorance.

At the Flats, the self-righted boor learned civilization and subordination: the high bred and high spirited field officer gentleness, accommodation, and respect for unpolished worth and untaught valor. There, too, the shrewd and deeply reflecting Indian learnt to respect the British character, and to confide in that of the settlers; by seeing the best specimens of both acting candidly towards each other, and generously to himself.

My friend was most particularly calculated to be the coadjutor of her excellent consort, in thus subduing the spirits of different classes of people, strongly disposed to entertain a repulsive dislike of each other, and by leading them to the chastened enjoyment of the same social pleasure, under the auspices of those, whose good will they were all equally convinced of, she contrived to smooth down asperities, and assimilate those various characters, in a manner that could not be done by any other means.

Accustomed from childhood, both from the general state of society, and the enlarged minds of her particular associates, to take liberal views of everything, and to look forward on all occasions to consequences, she steadily followed her wise and

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benevolent purposes, without being attracted by petty gratifications, or repelled by petty disgusts. Neither influenced by female vanity, or female fastidiousness, she might very truly say of popularity, as Falstaff says of Worcester's rebellion, "it lay in her way and she found it:" for no one ever took less pains to obtain it; and if the weight of solid usefulness and beneficence had not, as it never fails to do in the long run, forced approbation, her mode of conducting herself, though it might greatly endear her to her particular associates, was not conciliating to common minds. The fact was, that, though her benevolence extended through the whole circle of those to whom she was known, she had too many objects of importance in view to squander time upon imbecility and insignificance. Nor could she find leisure for the routine of ordinary visits, or inclination for the insipidity of ordinary chit-chat.

If people of the description here alluded to, could forward any plan advantageous to the public, or to any of those persons in whom she was particularly interested, she would treat them occasionally with much civility: for she had all the power of superior intellect without the pride of it: but could not submit to a perpetual sacrifice to forms and trifles. This, in her, was not only justifiable, but laudable; yet it is not mentioned as an example, because a case can very rarely occur, where the benefit resulting to others, from making one's own path, and forsaking the ordinary road, can be so essential; few ever



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can have a sphere of action so peculiar or so important as hers; and very few indeed have so sound a judgment to direct them in choosing, or so much fortitude to support them in pursuing, a way of their own.

In ordinary matters, where neither religion nor morality is concerned, it is much safer to trust to the common sense of mankind in general, than to our own particular fancy. Singularity of conduct or opinion is so often the result of vanity or affectation, that whoever ventures upon it ought to be a person whose example is looked up to by others. A person too great to follow, ought to be great enough to lead. But though her conversation was reserved for those she preferred, her advice, compassion, and good offices were always given where most needed.

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# Chapter XXIX

## MADAME'S ADOPTED CHILDREN — SISTER SUSAN

YEARS passed away in this manner, varied only by the extension of that protection and education which they gave to a succession of nephews and nieces of the colonel or Mrs. Schuyler. These they did not take from mere compassion, as all their relations were in easy circumstances; but influenced by various considerations, such as, in some cases, the death of the mother of the children, or perhaps the father; in others, where their nieces or nephews married very early, and lived in the houses of their respective parents, while their young family increased before they had a settled home; or in instances where, from the remote situations in which the parents lived, they could not so easily educate them. Indeed the difficulty of getting a suitable education for children, whose parents were ambitious for their improvement, was great; and a family so well regulated as hers, and frequented by such society, was in itself an academy, both for the best morals and manners. When people have children born to them, they must submit to the ordinary lot of humanity; and if they have not the happiness of meeting with many good qualities

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to cultivate and rejoice over, there is nothing left for them but to exert themselves to the utmost to reform and ameliorate what will admit of improvement. They must carefully weed and prop; if the soil produce a crop both feeble and redundant, affection will blind them, to many defects; imperious duty will stimulate them, and hope, soothing, however deceitful, will support them. But when people have the privilege, as in this case, of choosing a child, they are fairly entitled to select the most promising. This selection I understood always to have been left to Aunt Schuyler; and it appeared, by the event, to have been generally a happy one. Fifteen, either nephews or nieces, or the children of such, who had been under her care, all lived to grow up and go out into the world: all acted their parts so as to do credit to the instruction they had received, and the example they looked up to. Besides these, they had many whom they brought for two or three years to their house to reside; either because the family they came from was at the time crowded with younger children, or because they were at a time of life when a year or two spent in such society as was there assembled, might not only form their manners, but give a bias to their future character.

About the year 1730, they brought home a nephew of the colonel's, whose father having a large family, and having, to the best of my recollection,

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lost his wife, entirely gave over the boy to the protection of his relation. This boy was his uncle's god-son, and called Philip[1] after him. He was a great favorite in the family; for though apparently thoughtless and giddy, he had a very good temper, and quick parts; and was upon the whole an ingenious, lively, and amusing child. He was a very great favorite, and continued to be so in some measure, when he grew up.

There were other children, whose names and relation to my friends I do not remember, in the house at the same time; but none that staid so long, or were so much talked of as this. There certainly never were people who received so much company, made so respectable a figure in life, and always kept so large a family about them with so little tumult or bustle, or indeed at so moderate an expense. What their income was I cannot say; but am sure it could not have been what we should think adequate to the good they did, and the hospitality and beneficence which they practised: for the rents of land were then of so little value, that though they possessed a considerable estate in another part of the country, only very moderate profits could result from it; but, indeed, from the simplicity of dress, etc., it was easier; though in that respect, too, they preserved a kind of dignity, and went beyond others in the materials, though

[1] Colonel Schuyler's sister Gertrude married Johannes Lansing, and had a large family. It was her son Philip here referred to.

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not the form of their apparel. Yet their principal expense was a most plentiful and well ordered table, quite in the English style: which was a kind of innovation: but so many strangers frequented the houses of the three brothers, that it was necessary to accommodate themselves to the habit of their guests.

Peter being in his youth an extensive trader, had spent much time in Canada, among the noblesse there; and had served in the continental levies. He had a fine commanding figure, and quite the air and address of a gentleman, and was, when I knew him, an old man.

Intelligent and pleasing in a very high degree, Jeremiah had too much familiar kindness to be looked up to like his brother. Yet he also had a very good understanding, great frankness and affability, and was described by all who knew him, as the very soul of cordial friendship and warm benevolence. He married a polished and well educated person, whose parents (French protestants) were people of the first fashion in New York, and had given with her a good fortune, a thing very unusual in that country. They used in the early years of their marriage, to pay a visit every winter to their connections at New York, who passed part of every summer with them. This connection, as well as that with the Flats, gave an air of polish, and a tincture of elegance to this family beyond others; and there were few so gay and social.

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This cheerfulness was supported by a large family, fourteen, I think, of very promising children. These, however, inheriting from their mother's family a delicate constitution, died one after another as they came to maturity: one only, a daughter, lived to be married; but died after having had one son and one daughter.[1]

I saw the mother of this large family, after outliving her own children, and a still greater number of brothers and sisters, who had all settled in life, prosperous and flourishing, when she married; I saw her a helpless bed-ridden invalid; without any remaining tie, but a sordid grasping son-in-law, and two grandchildren, brought up at a distance from her.

With her, too, I was a great favorite, because I listened with interest to her details of early happiness, and subsequent woes and privations; all of which she described to me with great animation, and the most pathetic eloquence. How much a patient listener, who has sympathy and interest to bestow on a tale of wo, will hear! and how affecting is the respect and compassion even of an artless child, to a heart that has felt the bitterness of neglect, and known what it was to pine in solitary sadness! Many a bleak day have I walked a mile to visit this blasted tree, which the storm of calamity had stripped of every leaf! and surely in the house of sorrow the heart is made better.

[1] Three of Jeremiah Schuyler's daughters were married, but died before their mother, leaving small families.

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From this chronicle of past times, I derived much information respecting our good aunt; such as she would not have given me herself. The kindness of this generous sister-in-law was indeed the only light that shone on the declining days of Sister Susan, as she was wont affectionately to call her. What a sad narrative would the detail of this poor woman's sorrows afford! which, however, she did not relate in a querulous manner; for her soul was subdued by affliction, and she did not "mourn as those that have no hope." One instance of self-accusation I must record. She used to describe the family she left as being no less happy, united, and highly prosperous, than that into which she came: if, indeed, she could be said to leave it, going as she did for some months every year to her mother's house, whose darling she was, and who, being only fifteen years older than herself, was more like an elder sister, united by fond affection.

She went to New York to lie in, at her mother's house, of her four or five first children; her mother at the same time having children as young as hers: and thus caressed at home by a fond husband, and received with exultation by the tenderest parents; young, gay, and fortunate, her removals were only variations of felicity; but gratified in every wish, she knew not what sorrow was, nor how to receive the unwelcome stranger when it arrived. At length she went down to her father's as usual, to lie in of her fourth child, which died when it was eight days old.

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She then screamed with agony, and told her mother, who tried by pious counsel to alleviate her grief, that she was the most miserable of human beings; for that no one was capable of loving their child so well as she did hers, and could not think by what sin she had provoked this affliction: finally, she clasped the dead infant to her bosom, and was not, without the utmost difficulty, persuaded to part with it; while her frantic grief outraged all decorum. After this, said she, "I have seen my thirteen grown-up children, and my dear and excellent husband, all carried out of this house to the grave: I have lost the worthiest and most affectionate parents, brothers and sisters, such as few ever had; and however my heart might be pierced with sorrow, it was still more deeply pierced with a conviction of my own past impiety and ingratitude; and under all this affliction I wept silently and alone; and my outcry or lamentation was never heard by mortal." What a lesson was this!

This once much loved and much respected woman, have I seen sitting in her bed, where she had been long confined, neglected by all those whom she had known in her better days, excepting Aunt Schuyler, who, unwieldy and unfit for visiting as she was, came out two or three times in the year to see her, and constantly sent her kindly tokens of remembrance. Had she been more careful to preserve her independence, and had she accommodated herself more to the plain manners of the people she

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lived among, she might in her adversity have met with more attention; but too conscious of her attainments, lively, regardless, and perhaps vain, and confident of being surrounded and admired by a band of kinsfolk, she was at no pains to conciliate others; she had, too, some expensive habits; which, when the tide of prosperity ebbed, could meet with little indulgence among a people who never entertained an idea of living beyond their circumstances.

Thus, even among those unpolished people, one might learn how severely the insolence of prosperity can be avenged on us, even by those we have despised and slighted; and who perhaps were very much our inferiors in every respect: though both humanity and good sense should prevent our mortifying them, by showing ourselves sensible of that circumstance.

This year was a fatal one to the families of the three brothers. Jeremiah, impatient of the uneasiness caused by a wen upon his neck, submitted to undergo an operation: which, being unskillfully performed, ended fatally, to the unspeakable grief of his brothers and of aunt, who was particularly attached to him, and often dwelt on the recollection of his singularly compassionate disposition, the generous openness of his temper, and peculiar warmth of his affections. He, indeed, was "taken away from the evil to come;" for of his large family, one after the other went off, in consequence of the weakness of their lungs; which withstood none of

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the ordinary diseases of small-pox, measles, etc., till in a few years, there was not one remaining.

These were melancholy inroads on the peace of her, who might truly be said, to "watch and weep, and pray for all;" for nothing could exceed our good aunt's care and tenderness for this feeble family; who seemed flowers which merely bloomed to wither in their prime; for they were, as is often the case with those who inherit such disorders, beautiful, with quickness of comprehension, and abilities beyond their age.

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# Chapter XXX

## DEATH OF YOUNG PETER SCHUYLER — SOCIETY AT THE FLATS

ANOTHER very heavy sorrow followed the death of Jeremiah; Peter, being the eldest brother, his son, as I formerly mentioned, was considered and educated as heir to the colonel. It was Peter's house that stood next to the colonel's; their dwelling being arranged according to their ages, the youth was not in the least estranged from his own family (who were half a mile off), by his residence in his uncle's, and was peculiarly endeared to all the families (who regarded him as the future head of their house), by his gentle manners and excellent qualities. With all these personal advantages, which distinguished that comely race, and which give grace and attraction to the unfolding blossoms of virtue, at an early age he was sent to a kind of college, then established in New Jersey; and he was there instructed, as far as in that place he could be. He soon formed an attachment to a lady still younger than himself, but so well brought up, and so respectably connected, that his friends were greatly pleased with the marriage, early as it was, and his father, with the highest satisfaction, received the

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young couple into the house. There they were the delight and ornament of the family, and lived amongst them as a common blessing. The first year of their marriage a daughter was born to them, whom they named Cornelia; and the next, a son whom they called Peter.[1] The following year, which was the same that deprived them of their brother Jeremiah, proved fatal to a great many children and young people, in consequence of an endemial disease, which every now and then used to appear in the country, and made great havoc. It was called the purple or spotted fever, and was probably of the putrid kind: be that as it may, it proved fatal to this interesting young couple. Peter, who had lost his wife but a short time before, was entirely overwhelmed by this stroke: a hardness of hearing, which had been gradually increasing before, deprived him of the consolations he might have derived from society. He encouraged his second son to marry; shut himself up for the most part in his own apartment; and became, in effect, one of those lay brothers I have formerly described. Yet, when time had blunted the edge of this keen affliction, many years after, when we lived at the Flats, he used to visit us: and though

[1] Peter Schuyler, third of the name, married Gertrude, daughter of John Schuyler, Jr., and sister of Philip S., the future major-general. He died September, 1753, leaving a widow and two children. His daughter Cornelia married Walter Livingston of the Manor; and his son Peter married Gertrude Lansing. His widow subsequently married Dr. John Cochran, surgeon-general of the Revolutionary Army.

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he did not hear well, he conversed with great spirit, and was full of anecdote and information. Meanwhile, Madame did not sink under this calamity, though she felt it as much as her husband, but supported him; and exerted herself to extract consolation from performing the duties of a mother to the infant who was now become the representative of the family. Little Peter [1] was accordingly brought home, and succeeded to all that care and affection of which his father had formerly been the object, while Cornelia was taken home to Jersey, to the family of her maternal grandfather, [2] who was a distinguished person in that district. There she was exceedingly well educated, became an elegant and very pleasing young woman, and was happily and most respectably married before I left the country, as was her brother very soon after. They are still living; and Peter, adhering to what might be called, eventually the safer side, during the war with the mother country, succeeded undisturbed to his uncle's inheritance.

All these new cares and sorrows did not in the least abate the hospitality, the popularity, or the public spirit of these truly great minds. Their dwelling, though in some measure become a house of mourning, was still the rendezvous of the wise

[1] Peter Schuyler, fourth of the name, was a man of considerable prominence, and was State Senator several terms. He died January, 1792, leaving no children.

[2] Her step-father, Dr. John Cochran, lived for a time in New Brunswick, N. J.

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and worthy, the refuge of the stranger, and an academy for deep and sound thinking, taste, intelligence, and moral beauty. There the plans for the public good were digested by the rulers of the province, who came, under the pretext of a summer excursion for mere amusement. There the operations of the army, and the treaties of peace or alliance with various nations, were arranged; for there the legislators of the state, and the leaders of the war, were received, and mixed serious and important counsels with convivial cheerfulness, and domestic ease and familiarity. 'T is not to be conceived how essential a point of union, a barrier against license, and a focus, in which the rays of intellect and intelligence were concentrated (such as in this family), were to unite the jarring elements of which the community was composed, and to suggest to those who had power without experience, the means of mingling in due proportions its various materials for the public utility. Still, though the details of family happiness were abridged, the spirit that produced it continued to exist, and to find new objects of interest. A mind elevated by the consciousness of its own powers, and enlarged by the habitual exercise of them, for the great purpose of promoting the good of others, yields to the pressure of calamity, but sinks not under it; particularly when habituated, like these exalted characters, to look through the long vista of futurity towards the final accomplishment of the designs of Providence. Like

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a diligent gardener, who, when his promising young plants are blasted in full strength and beauty, though he feels extremely for their loss, does not sit down in idle chagrin, but redoubles his efforts to train up their successors to the same degree of excellence. Considering the large family she (Madame) always had about her, of which she was the guiding star as well as the informing soul, and the innocent cheerfulness which she encouraged and enjoyed; considering, too, the number of interesting guests whom she received, and that complete union of minds, which made her enter so intimately into all the colonel's pursuits, it may be wondered how she found time for solid and improved reading; because people, whose time is so much occupied in business and society, are apt to relax, with amusing trifles of the desultory kind, when they have odd half hours to bestow on literary amusements. But her strong and indefatigable mind never loosened its grasp; ever intent on the useful and the noble, she found little leisure for what are indeed the greatest objects of feeble characters. After the middle of life she went little out; her household, long since arranged by certain general rules, went regularly on, because every domestic knew exactly the duties of his or her place, and dreaded losing it, as the greatest possible misfortune. She had always with her some young person, "who was unto her as a daughter;" who was her friend and companion; and bred up in such a manner as

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to qualify her for being such; and one of whose duties it was to inspect the state of the household, and "report progress," with regard to the operations going on in the various departments. For no one better understood, or more justly estimated, the duties of housewifery. Thus, those young females, who had the happiness of being bred under her auspices, very soon became qualified to assist her, instead of encroaching much on her time. The example and conversation of the family in which they lived, was to them a perpetual school for useful knowledge, and manners easy and dignified, though natural and artless. They were not indeed embellished, but then they were not deformed by affectation, pretensions, or defective imitations of fashionable models of nature. They were not indeed bred up "to dance, to dress, to roll the eye, or troul the tongue;" yet they were not lectured into unnatural gravity, or frozen reserve. I have seen those of them that were lovely, gay, and animated, though in the words of an old familiar lyric,

"Without disguise or art, like flowers that grace the wild,
Their sweets they did impart whene'er they spoke or smiled."

Two of those to whom this description particularly applies, still live; and still retain not only evident traces of beauty, but that unstudied grace and dignity which is the result of conscious worth and honor, habituated to receive the tribute of general respect. This is the privilege of minds which are



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always in their own place, and neither stoop to solicit applause from their inferiors, nor strive to rise to a fancied equality with those whom nature or fortune have placed beyond them.

Aunt was a great manager of her time, and always contrived to create leisure hours for reading; for that kind of conversation which is properly styled gossiping, she had the utmost contempt. Light, superficial reading, such as merely fills a blank in time, and glides over the mind without leaving an impression, was little known there; for few books crossed the Atlantic but such as were worth carrying so far for their intrinsic value. She was too much accustomed to have her mind occupied with objects of real weight and importance, to give it up to frivolous pursuits of any kind. She began the morning with reading the scriptures. They always breakfasted early, and dined two hours later than the primitive inhabitants, who always took that meal at twelve. This departure from the ancient customs was necessary in this family, to accommodate the great numbers of British as well as strangers from New York, who were daily entertained at her liberal table. This arrangement gave her the advantage of a longer forenoon to dispose of. After breakfast she gave orders for the family details of the day, which, without a scrupulous attention to those minutæ which fell more properly under the notice of her young friends, she always regulated in the most judicious manner, so as to

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prevent all appearance of hurry and confusion. There was such a rivalry among domestics, whose sole ambition was her favor; and who had been so trained up from infancy, each to their several duties, that excellence in each department was the result both of habit and emulation; while her young protégés were early taught the value and importance of good housewifery, and were sedulous to little matters of decoration and elegance, which her mind was too much engrossed to attend to; so that her household affairs, ever well regulated, went on in a mechanical kind of progress, that seemed to engage little of her attention, though her vigilant and overruling mind set every spring of action in motion. Having thus easily and speedily arranged the details of the day, she retired to read in her closet, where she generally remained till about eleven; when, being unequal to distant walks, the colonel and she, and some of her elder guests, passed some of the hotter hours among those embowering shades of her garden, in which she took great pleasure. Here was their lyceum; here questions in religion and morality, too weighty for table talk, were leisurely and coolly discussed; and plans of policy and various utility arranged. From this retreat they adjourned to the portico; and while the colonel either retired to write, or went to give directions to his servants, she sat in this little tribunal, giving audience to new settlers, followers of the army left in hapless dependence, and others

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who wanted assistance or advice, or hoped she would intercede with the colonel for something more peculiarly in his way, he having great influence with the colonial government. At the usual hour her dinner-party assembled, which was generally a large one; and here I must digress from the detail of the day to observe, that, looking up as I always did to Madame with admiring veneration, and having always heard her mentioned with unqualified applause, I look often back to think what defects or faults she could possibly have to rank with the sons and daughters of imperfection, inhabiting this transitory scene of existence, well knowing, from subsequent observation of life, that error is the unavoidable portion of humanity. Yet of this truism, to which every one will readily subscribe, I can recollect no proof in my friend's conduct, unless the luxury of her table might be produced to confirm it. Yet this, after all, was but comparative luxury. There was more choice and selection, and perhaps more abundance at her table, than at those of the other primitive inhabitants, yet how simple were her repasts compared to those which the luxury of the higher ranks in this country offer to provoke the sated appetite. Her dinner-party generally consisted of some of her intimate friends or near relations; her adopted children, who were inmates for the time being; and strangers sometimes invited, merely as friendless travellers, on the score of hospitality, but often welcomed for

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STATE STREET, ALBANY, FROM NEAR LODGE STREET LOOKING EAST

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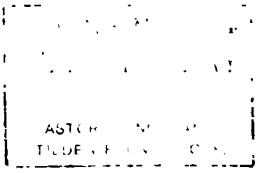

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some time as stationary visitors, on account of worth or talents, that gave value to their society; and, lastly, military guests, selected with some discrimination on account of the young friends, whom they wished not only to protect, but cultivate by an improving association. Conversation here was always rational, generally instructive, and often cheerful. The afternoon frequently brought with it a new set of guests. Tea was always drank early here; and as I have formerly observed, was attended with so many petty luxuries of pastry, confectionery, etc., that it might well be accounted a meal by those whose early and frugal dinners had so long gone by. In Albany it was customary, after the heat of the day was past, for the young people to go in parties of three or four, in open carriages, to drink tea at an hour or two's drive from town. The receiving and entertaining this sort of company generally was the province of the younger part of the family; and of these parties many came in summer evenings to the Flats, when tea, which was very early, was over. The young people, and those who were older, took their different walks, while Madame sat in her portico, engaged in what might comparatively be called light reading, essays, biography, poetry, etc., till the younger party set out on their return home, and her domestic friends rejoined her in her portico, where, in warm evenings, a slight repast was sometimes brought; but they more frequently shared the last and most truly social meal within.

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Winter made little difference in her mode of occupying her time. She then always retired to her closet to read at stated periods.

In conversation she certainly took delight, and peculiarly excelled; yet did not in the least engross it, or seem to dictate. On the contrary, her thirst for knowledge was such, and she possessed such a peculiar talent for discovering the point of utility in all things, that from every one's discourse she extracted some information, on which the light of her mind was thrown in such a direction, as made it turn to account. Whenever she laid down her book she took up her knitting, which neither occupied her eyes nor attention, while it kept her fingers engaged; thus setting an example of humble diligence to her younger protégés. In this employment she had a kind of tender satisfaction, as little children, reared in the family, were the only objects of her care in this respect. For those, she constantly provided a supply of hosiery till they were seven years old; and, after that, transferred her attention to some younger favorite. In her earlier days, when her beloved colonel could share the gaieties of society, I have been told they both had a high relish for innocent mirth, and every species of humorous pleasantry; but in my time there was a chastened gravity in her discourse, which, however, did not repulse innocent cheerfulness, though it dashed all manner of levity, and that flippancy which great familiarity sometimes en-

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courages amongst young people, who live much together. Had Madame, with the same good sense, the same high principle, and general benevolence towards young people, lived in society such as is to be met with in Britain, the principle upon which she acted would have led her to have encouraged in such society more gaiety and freedom of manners. As the regulated forms of life in Britain set bounds to the ease that accompanies good breeding, and refinement, generally diffused, supplies the place of native delicacy, where that is wanting, a certain decent freedom is both safe and allowable. But amid the simplicity of primitive manners, those bounds are not so well defined. Under these circumstances, mirth is a romp, and humor a buffoon; and both must be kept within strict limits.

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# Chapter XXXI

## HOSPITALITY — ACHIEVEMENTS BY THE NEGROES

THE hospitalities of this family were so far beyond their apparent income, that all strangers were astonished at them. To account for this, it must be observed that, in the first place, there was perhaps scarce an instance of a family possessing such uncommonly well trained, active, and diligent slaves as that I describe. The set that were staid servants, when they married, had some of them died off by the time I knew the family; but the principal roots from whence the many branches, then flourishing, sprung, yet remained. These were two women, who had come originally from Africa while very young; they were most excellent servants, and the mothers or grand-mothers of the whole set, except one white-wooled negro man; who, in my time, sat by the chimney and made shoes for all the rest. The great pride and happiness of these sable matrons were, to bring up their children to dexterity, diligence, and obedience. Diana being determined that Maria's children should not excel hers in any quality, which was a recommendation to favor; and Maria equally resolved

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that her brood, in the race of excellence, should outstrip Diana's. Never was a more fervent competition. That of Phillis and Brunetta, in the Spectator, was a trifle to it; and it was extremely difficult to decide on their respective merits; for though Maria's son Prince, cut down wood with more dexterity and dispatch than any one in the province, the mighty Cæsar, son of Diana, cut down wheat and threshed it, better than he. His sister Betty, who, to her misfortune, was a beauty of her kind, and possessed wit equal to her beauty, was the best seamstress and laundress, by far, I have ever known; and plain unpretending Rachel, sister to Prince, wife to Titus, alias Tyte, and head cook, dressed dinners that might have pleased Apicius. I record my old humble friends by their real names, because they allowedly stood at the head of their own class; and distinction of every kind should be respected. Besides, when the curtain drops, or indeed long before it falls, 't is perhaps more creditable to have excelled in the lowest parts, than to have fallen miserably short in the higher. Of the inferior personages, in this dark drama I have been characterizing, it would be tedious to tell: suffice it, that besides filling up all the lower departments of the household, and cultivating to the highest advantage a most extensive farm, there was a thoroughbred carpenter and shoemaker, and an universal genius who made canoes, nets, and paddles; shod horses, mended implements of husbandry,

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managed the fishing, in itself no small department, reared hemp and tobacco, and spun both; made cider, and tended wild horses, as they call them; which it was his province to manage and to break. For every branch of the domestic economy, there was a person allotted, educated for the purpose; and this society was kept immaculate, in the same way that the Quakers preserve the rectitude of theirs; and indeed, in the only way that any community can be preserved from corruption; when a member showed symptoms of degeneracy, he was immediately expelled, or in other words, more suitable to this case, sold. Among the domestics, there was such a rapid increase, in consequence of their marrying very early, and living comfortably without care, that if they had not been detached off with the young people brought up in the house, they would have swarmed like an overstocked hive.

The prevention of crimes was so much attended to in this well-regulated family, that there was very little punishment necessary; none that I ever heard of, but such as Diana and Maria inflicted on their progeny, with a view to prevent the dreaded sentence of expulsion; notwithstanding the petty rivalry between the branches of the two original stocks, intermarriages between the Montagues and Capulets of the kitchen, which frequently took place, and the habit of living together under the same mild, though regular government, produced a general cordiality and affection among all the members

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of the family, who were truly ruled by the law of love: and even those who occasionally differed about trifles, had an unconscious attachment to each other, which showed itself on all emergencies. Treated themselves with care and gentleness, they were careful, and kind, with regard to the only inferiors and dependents they had, the domestic animals. The superior personages in the family, had always some good property to mention, or good saying to repeat of those whom they cherished into attachment, and exalted into intelligence; while they, in their turn, improved the sagacity of their subject animals, by caressing and talking to them. Let no one laugh at this; for whenever a man is at ease and unsophisticated, where his native humanity is not extinguished by want, or chilled by oppression, it overflows to inferior beings; and improves their instincts, to a degree incredible to those who have not witnessed it. In all mountainous countries, where man is more free, more genuine, and more divided into little societies much detached from others, and much attached to each other, this cordiality of sentiment, this overflow of good will take place. The poet says,

> "Humble love, and not proud reason,
> Keeps the door of heaven."

This question must be left for divines to determine; but sure am I that humble love, and not proud reason, keeps the door of earthly happiness, as far

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as it is attainable. I am not going, like the admirable Crichton, to make an oration in praise of ignorance; but a very high degree of refinement certainly produces a quickness of discernment, a niggard approbation, and a fastidiousness of taste, that find a thousand repulsive and disgusting qualities mingled with those that excite our admiration, and would (were we less critical) produce affection. Alas! that the tree should so literally impart the knowledge of good and evil; much evil and little good. It is time to return from this excursion, to the point from which I set out.

The Princes and Cæsars of the Flats had as much to tell of the sagacity and attachments of the animals, as their mistress related of their own. Numberless anecdotes that delighted me in the last century, I would recount; but fear I should not find my audience of such easy belief as I was; nor so convinced of the integrity of my informers. One circumstance I must mention, because I well know it to be true. The colonel had a horse which he rode occasionally, but which oftener travelled with Mrs. Schuyler in an open carriage. At particular times, when bringing home hay or corn, they yoked Wolf, for so he was called, in a wagon; an indignity to which, for a while, he unwillingly submitted. At length, knowing resistance was in vain, he had recourse to stratagem; and whenever he saw Tyte marshalling his cavalry for service, he swam over to the island; the um-

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brageous and tangled border of which I formerly mentioned: there he fed with fearless impunity till he saw the boat approach; whenever that happened he plunged into the thicket, and led his followers such a chase, that they were glad to give up the pursuit. When he saw from his retreat that the work was over, and the fields bare, he very coolly returned. Being, by this time, rather old, and a favorite, the colonel allowed him to be indulged in his dislike to drudgery. The mind which is at ease, neither stung by remorse, nor goaded by ambition or other turbulent passions, nor worn with anxiety for the supply of daily wants, nor sunk into languor by stupid idleness, forms attachments and amusements, to which those exalted by culture would not stoop, and those crushed by want and care could not rise. Of this nature was the attachment to the tame animals which the domestics appropriated to themselves, and to the little fanciful gardens where they raised herbs or plants of difficult culture, to sell and give to their friends. Each negro was indulged with his great squirrel, or musk rat; or perhaps his beaver, which he tamed and attached to himself, by daily feeding and caressing him in the farm-yard. One was sure about all such houses, to find these animals, in whom their masters took the highest pleasure. All these small features of human nature must not be despised for their minuteness. To a good mind they afford consolation.

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Science, directed by virtue, is a godlike enlargement of the powers of human nature; and exalted rank is so necessary a finish to the fabric of society, and so invariable a result from its regular establishment, that in respecting those, whom the divine wisdom has set above us, we perform a duty such as we expect from our own inferiors; which helps to support the general order of society. But so very few in proportion to the whole can be enlightened by science, or exalted by situation, that a good mind draws comfort from discovering even the petty enjoyments permitted to those in the state we consider most abject and depressed.

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# Chapter XXXII

## RESOURCES OF MADAME — PROVINCIAL CUSTOMS

IT may appear extraordinary, with so moderate an income, as could in those days be derived even from a considerable estate in that country, how Madame found means to support that liberal hospitality, which they constantly exercised. I know the utmost they could derive from their lands, and it was not much: some money they had, but nothing adequate to the dignity, simple as it was, of their style of living, and the very large family they always drew around them. But with regard to the plenty, one might almost call it luxury, of their table, it was supplied from a variety of sources, that rendered it less expensive than could be imagined. Indians, grateful for the numerous benefits they were daily receiving from them, were constantly bringing the smaller game, and, in winter and spring, loads of venison. Little money passed from one hand to another in the country; but there was constantly, as there always is in primitive abodes, before the age of calculation begins, a kindly commerce of presents. The people of New York and Rhode Island, several of whom were wont to pass a part of the summer with the

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colonel's family, were loaded with all the productions of the farm and river, when they went home. They again never failed, at the season, to send a large supply of oysters, and all other shell-fish, which at New York abounded; besides great quantities of tropical fruit, which, from the short run between Jamaica and New York, were there almost as plenty and cheap as in their native soil. Their farm yielded them abundantly all that in general a musket can supply; and the young relatives who grew up about the house, were rarely a day without bringing some supply from the wood or the stream. The negroes, whose business lay frequently in the woods, never willingly went there, or any where else, without a gun, and rarely came back empty handed. Presents of wine, then a very usual thing to send to friends to whom you wished to show a mark of gratitude, came very often, possibly from the friends of the young people who were reared and instructed in that house of benediction; as there were no duties paid for the entrance of any commodity there, wine, rum, and sugar, were cheaper than can easily be imagined; and in cider they abounded.

The negroes of the three truly united brothers, not having home employment in winter, after preparing fuel, used to cut down trees, and carry them to an adjoining saw-mill, where in a very short time, they made great quantities of planks, staves, etc., which is usually styled lumber, for the West India

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market. And when a ship load of their flour, lumber, and salted provisions were accumulated, some relative, for their behoof, freighted a vessel, and went out to the West Indies with it. In this Stygian schooner, the departure of which was always looked forward to with unspeakable horror, all the stubborn or otherwise unmanageable slaves were embarked, to be sold by way of punishment. This produced such salutary terror, that preparing the lading of this fatal vessel generally operated a temporary reform at least. When its cargo was discharged in the West Indies, it took in a cargo of wine, rum, sugar, coffee, chocolate, and all other West India productions, paying for whatever fell short of the value, and returning to Albany, sold the surplus to their friends, after reserving to themselves a most liberal supply of all the articles thus imported. Thus they had not only a profusion of all the requisites for good house-keeping, but had it in their power to do what was not unusual there in wealthy families, though none carried it so far as these worthies.

In process of time, as people multiplied, when a man had eight or ten children to settle in life, and these marrying early, and all their families increasing fast, though they always were considered as equals, and each kept a neat house and decent outside, yet it might be that some of them were far less successful than others, in their various efforts to support their families; but these deficien-



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cies were supplied in a quiet and delicate way, by presents of every thing a family required, sent from all their connections and acquaintances; which, where there was a continual sending back and forward of sausages, pigs, roasting pieces, etc., from one house to another, excited little attention: but when aunt's West Indian cargo arrived all the families of this description within her reach, had an ample boon sent them of her new supply.

The same liberal spirit animated her sister, a very excellent person, who was married to Cornelius Cuyler,[1] then mayor of Albany; who had been a most successful Indian trader in his youth, and had acquired large Indian possessions, and carried on an extensive commercial intercourse with the traders of that day, bringing from Europe quantities of those goods that best suited them, and sending back their peltry in exchange; he was not only wealthy, but hospitable, intelligent, and liberal-minded, as appeared by his attachment to the army; which was, in those days, the distinguishing feature of those who in knowledge and candor were beyond others. His wife had the same considerate and prudent generosity, which ever directed the humanity of her sister; though, having a large family, she could not carry it to so great an extent.

If this maternal friend of their mutual relatives could be said to have a preference among her own,

[1] Cornelius Cuyler was the son of Johannes Cuyler and his wife Elsie, daughter of Dirk Wesselse Ten Broeck.

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and her husband's relations, it was certainly to this family. The eldest son Philip, who bore her husband's name, was on that and other accounts, a particular favorite; and was, I think, as much with them in childhood, as his attention to his education, which was certainly the best the province could afford, would permit.

Having become distinguished through all the northern provinces, the common people, and the inferior class of the military, had learned from the Canadians who frequented her house, to call aunt, Madame Schuyler: but by one or other of these appellations she was universally known: and a kindly custom prevailed, for those who were received into any degree of intimacy in her family, to address her as their aunt, though not in the least related. This was done oftener to her than others, because she excited more respect and affection; but it had in some degree the sanction of custom. The Albanians were sure to call each other aunt or cousin, as far as the most strained construction would carry those relations. To strangers they were indeed very shy at first, but extremely kind; when they not only proved themselves estimable, but by a condescension to their customs, and acquiring a smattering of their language, ceased to be strangers, then they were in a manner adopted; for the first seal of cordial intimacy among the young people was to call each other cousin; and thus in an hour of playful or tender intimacy I have known it more than once

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begin: "I think you like me well enough, and I am sure I like you very well; come, why should not we be cousins?" "I am sure I should like very well to be your cousin, for I have no cousins of my own where I can reach them." "Well, then you shall be my cousin, for ever and ever." In this uncouth language, and in this artless manner, were these leagues of amity commenced. Such an intimacy was never formed unless the object of it were a kind of favorite with the parents, who immediately commenced uncle and aunt to the new cousin. This, however, was a high privilege, only to be kept by fidelity and good conduct. If you exposed your new cousin's faults, or repeated her minutest secrets, or by any other breach of constancy lost favor, it was as bad as refusing a challenge; you were coldly received every where, and could never regain your footing in society.

Aunt's title, however, became current every where, and was most completely confirmed in the year 1750, when she gave with more than common solemnity a kind of annual feast, to which the colonel's two brothers, and his sisters, aunt's sister, Mrs. Cornelius Cuyler, and their families, with several other young people related to them, assembled. This was not given on a stated day, but at a time when most of these kindred could be collected. This year I have often heard my good friend commemorate, as that on which the family stock of happiness felt the first diminution. The feast was made,

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and attended by all the collateral branches, consisting of fifty-two, who had a claim by marriage or descent, to call the colonel and my friend uncle and aunt, besides their parents. Among these were reckoned three or four grandchildren of their brothers. At this grand gala there could be no less than sixty persons, but many of them were doomed to meet no more; for the next year the small-pox, always peculiarly mortal here (where it was improperly treated in the old manner), broke out with great virulence, and raged like a plague; but none of those relatives whom Mrs. Schuyler had domesticated suffered by it; and the skill which she had acquired from the communications of the military surgeons who were wont to frequent her house, enabled her to administer advice and assistance, which essentially benefited many of the patients in whom she was particularly interested; though even her influence could not prevail on people to have recourse to inoculation. The patriarchal feast of the former year, and the humane exertions of this, made the colonel and his consort appear so much in the light of public benefactors, that all the young regarded them with a kind of filial reverence, and the addition of uncle and aunt was become confirmed and universal, and was considered as an honorary distinction. The ravages which the small-pox made this year among their Mohawk friends, was a source of deep concern to these revered philanthropists; but this was an evil not to be rem-

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edied by any ordinary means. These people being accustomed from early childhood to anoint themselves with bear's grease, to repel the innumerable tribes of noxious insects in summer, and to exclude the extreme cold in winter, their pores are so completely shut up, that the small-pox does not rise upon them, nor have they much chance of recovery from any acute disease; but, excepting the fatal infection already mentioned, they are not subject to any other but the rheumatism, unless in very rare instances. The ravages of disease this year operated on their population as a blow, which it never recovered; and they considered the small-pox in a physical, and the use of strong liquors in a moral sense, as two plagues which we had introduced among them, for which our arts, our friendship, and even our religion, were a very inadequate recompense.

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# Chapter XXXIII

## FOLLOWERS OF THE ARMY—RESULTING INCONVENIENCES

TO return to the legion of commissaries, etc. These em-ployments were at first given to very inferior people; it was seen, however, that as the scale of military operations and erections increased, these people were enriching themselves, both at the expense of the king and the inhabitants; whom they frequently exasperated into insolence, or resistance, and then used that pretext to keep in their own hands the payments to which these people were entitled. When their wagons and slaves were pressed into the service, it was necessary to employ such persons from the first. The colonel and the mayor, and all whom they could influence, did all they could to alleviate an evil that could not be prevented, and was daily aggravating disaffection. They found, as the importance of these offices increased, it would conduce more to the public good, by larger salaries to induce people to accept them who were gentlemen, and had that character to support; and who, being acquainted with the people and their language, knew best how to qualify and soften, and where to

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apply, so as least to injure or irritate. Some young men, belonging to the country, were at length prevailed on to accept two or three of these offices; which had the happiest effect, in conciliating and conquering the aversion that existed against the regulars.

Among the first of the natives who engaged in those difficult employments, was one of aunt's adopted sons, formerly mentioned; Philip Schuyler of the pasture,[1] as he was called, to distinguish him from the other nephew; who, had he lived, would have been the colonel's heir. He appeared merely a careless good humored young man. Never was any one so little what he seemed, with regard to ability, activity, and ambition, art, enterprise, and perseverance, all of which he possessed in an uncommon degree, though no man had less the appearance of these qualities; easy, complying, and good humored, the conversations, full of wisdom and sound policy, of which he had been a seemingly inattentive witness, at the Flats, only slept in his recollection, to wake in full force when called forth by occasion.

A shrewd and able man, who was, I think, a brigadier[2] in the service, was appointed quartermaster general, with the entire superintendence of

[1] "Philip Schuyler of the pasture" refers to the future general. He married Catharine, daughter of Col. John Van Rensselaer of Claverack. His residence at this time was south of Albany, overlooking the fields in which the citizens pastured their cows.

[2] General Bradstreet, who built the house then occupied by his friend, Philip Schuyler.

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NORTH PEARL STREET, FROM STEUBEN STREET SOUTH, AS IT WAS A CENTURY AGO

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all the boats, buildings, etc., in New York, the Jerseys, and Canadian frontier. He had married, when very young, a daughter of Colonel Rensselaer. Having at the time no settled plan for the support of a young family, he felt it incumbent on him to make some unusual exertion for them. Colonel Schuyler and his consort not only advised him to accept an inferior employment in this business, but recommended him to the Brigadier Bradstreet, who had the power of disposing of such offices, which were daily growing in importance. They well knew that he possessed qualities which might not only render him an useful servant to the public, but clear his way to fortune and distinction. His perfect command of temper, acuteness, and dispatch in business, and in the hour of social enjoyment, easily relapsing into all that careless frank hilarity and indolent good humor, which seems the peculiar privilege of the free and disencumbered mind, active and companionable, made him a great acquisition to any person under whom he might happen to be employed. This the penetration of Bradstreet soon discovered; and he became not only his secretary and deputy, but in a short time after, his ambassador, as one might say: for before Philip Schuyler was twenty-two, the general, as he was universally styled, sent him to England to negotiate some business of importance with the board of trade and plantations. In the meanwhile some other young men, natives of the country, accepted

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employments in the same department, by this time greatly extended. Averse as the country people were to the army, they began to relish the advantage derived from the money which that body of protectors, so much feared and detested, expended among them. This was more considerable than might at first be imagined. Government allowed provisions to the troops serving in America; without which they could not indeed have proceeded through an uninhabited country; where even in such places as were inhabited, there were no regular markets, no competition for supply; nothing but exorbitant prices could tempt those people who were not poor, and found a ready market for all their produce in the West-Indies. Now having a regular supply of such provisions as are furnished to the fleet, they had no occasion to lay out their money for such things; and rather purchased the produce of the country, liquors, etc., for which the natives took care to make them pay very high; an evil which the Schuylers moderated as much as possible, though they could not check it entirely. This provision system was a very great, though necessary evil; for it multiplied contractors, commissaries and store-keepers without end. At a distance from the source of authority, abuses increase, and redress becomes more difficult; which is of itself a sufficient argument against the extension of dominion. Many of those new comers were ambiguous characters, originally from the old

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country (as expatriated Britons fondly call their native land), but little known in this, and not happy specimens of that they had left. These satellites of delegated power had all the insolence of office, and all that avidity of gain, which a sudden rise of circumstances creates in low and unprincipled minds; and they, from the nature of their employment, and the difficulty of getting provisions transported from place to place, were very frequently the medium of that intercourse carried on between the military and the natives: and did not by any means contribute to raise the British character in their estimation.

I dwell the more minutely on all these great, though necessary evils, which invariably attend an army in its progress through a country which is the theatre of actual war, that the reader may be led to set a just value on the privileges of this highly favored region; which, sitting on many waters, sends forth her thunders through the earth; and while the farthest extremes of the east and west bend to her dominion, has not for more than half a century heard the sound of hostility within her bounds. Many unknown persons, who were in some way attached to the army, and resolved to live by it in some shape, set up as traders; carried stores suited to military consumption along with them, and finally established themselves as merchants in Albany. Some of these proved worthy characters, however; and intermarrying with the

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daughters of the citizens, and adopting in some degree their sober manners, became in process of time estimable members of society. Others, and indeed the most part of them, rose like exhalations, and obtaining credit by dint of address and assurance, glittered for a time; affecting showy and expensive modes of living, and aping the manners of their patrons. These, as soon as peace diminished their military establishment, and put an end to that ferment and fluctuation, which the actual presence of war never fails to excite, burst like bubbles on the surface of the subsiding waves, and astonished the Albanians with the novel spectacle of bankruptcy and imprisonment. All this gradually wrought a change on the face of society; yet such was the disgust which the imputed licentiousness, foppery, and extravagance of the officers, and the pretensions unsupported by worth or knowledge of their apes and followers, produced, that the young persons, who first married those ambiguous new comers, generally did so without the consent of their parents; whose affection for their children, however, soon reconciled them.

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# Chapter XXXIV

## ARRIVAL OF A NEW REGIMENT — DOMINE FRIELINGHUYSEN

A REGIMENT came to town about this time, the superior officers of which were younger, more gay, and less amenable to good counsel than those who used to command the troops, which had formerly been placed on this station. They paid their visits at the Flats, and were received; but not as usual, cordially; neither their manners nor morals being calculated for that meridian. Part of the Royal Americans, or independent companies, had at this time possession of the fort; some of these had families: and they were in general persons of decent morals, and a moderate and judicious way of thinking, who, though they did not court the society of the natives, expressed no contempt for their manners or opinions. The regiment I speak of, on the contrary turned those plain burghers into the highest ridicule, yet used every artifice to get acquainted with them. They wished in short to act the part of very fine gentlemen; and the gay and superficial in those days were but too apt to take for their model the fine gentlemen of the detestable old comedies; which good taste has now very properly

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exploded; and at which, in every stage of society, the uncorrupted mind must have felt infinite disgust. Yet forms arrayed in gold and scarlet, and rendered more imposing by an air of command and authority, occasionally softened down into gentleness and submission; and by that noisy gaiety which youthful inexperience mistakes for happiness, and that flippant petulance, which those who knew not much of the language, and nothing at all of the world, mistook for wit, were very ensnaring. Those dangerously accomplished heroes made their appearance at a time when the English language began to be more generally understood; and when the pretensions of the merchants, commissaries, etc., to the stations they occupied were no longer dubious. Those polished strangers now began to make a part of general society. At this crisis it was that it was found necessary to have recourse to billets. The superior officers had generally been either received at the Flats, or accommodated in a large house which the colonel had in town. The manner in which the hospitality of that family was exercised, the selection which they made of such as were fitted to associate with the young persons who dwelt under their protection, always gave a kind of tone to society; and held out a light to others.

Madame's sister, as I before observed, was married to the respectable and intelligent magistrate, who administered justice, not only to the

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town, but to the whole neighborhood. In their house, also, such of the military were received, and entertained, as had the sanction of her sister's approbation. This judicious and equitable person, who in the course of trading in early life upon the lakes, had undergone many of the hardships, and even dangers, which awaited the military in that perilous path of duty, knew well what they had to encounter in the defence of a surly and self-righted race, who were little inclined to show them common indulgence: far less gratitude. He judged equitably between both parties; and while with the most patriotic steadiness he resisted every attempt of the military to seize anything with a high hand, he set the example himself, and used every art of persuasion to induce his countrymen to every concession that could conduce to the ease and comfort of their protectors. So far at length he succeeded, that when the regiment to which I allude arrived in town, and showed in general an amiable and obliging disposition, they were quartered in different houses; the superior officers being lodged willingly by the most respectable of the inhabitants, such as, not having large families, had room to accommodate them. The colonel and Madame happened, at the time of these arrangements, to be at New York.

In the meanwhile society began to assume a new aspect; of the satellites, which on various pretexts, official and commercial, had followed the army,

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several had families, and those began to mingle more frequently with the inhabitants: who were as yet too simple to detect the surreptitious tone of lax morals and second-handed manners, which prevailed among many of those who had but very lately climbed up to the stations they held, and in whose houses the European modes and diversions were to be met with; these were not in the best style, yet even in that style they began to be relished by some young persons, with whom the power of novelty prevailed over that of habit; and in a few rare instances, the influence of the young drew the old into a faint consent to these attempted innovations; but with many the resistance was not to be overcome.

In this state of matters, one guardian genius watched over the community with unremitting vigilance. From the original settlement of the place there had been a succession of good quiet clergymen, who came from Holland to take the command of this expatriated colony. These good men found an easy charge, among a people with whom the external duties of religion were settled habits, which no one thought of dispensing with; and where the primitive state of manners, and the constant occupation of the mind in planting and defending a territory where everything was, as it were, to be new created, was a preservation to the morals. Religion being never branded with the reproach of imputed hypocrisy, or darkened by the frown of austere

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bigotry, was venerated even by those who were content to glide thoughtless down the stream of time, without seriously considering whither it was conveying them till sorrow or sickness reminded them of the great purpose for which they were indulged with the privilege of existence.

The domines, as these people called their ministers, contented themselves with preaching in a sober and moderate strain to the people; and, living quietly in the retirement of their families, were little heard of but in the pulpit; and they seemed to consider a studious privacy as one of their chief duties. Domine Frielinghuysen,[1] however, was not contented with this quietude, which he seemed to consider as tending to languish into indifference. Ardent in his disposition, eloquent in his preaching, animated and zealous in his conversation, and frank

[1] Theodorus Frielinghuysen was the eldest son of Rev. Jacobus Theodorus Frielinghuysen, a native of West Friesland, who came over in 1720, and settled in New Jersey. His five sons became pastors of churches, and his two daughters married pastors. Domine Frielinghuysen came to Albany in 1746; he published a catechism in the Dutch tongue, the second edition of which was issued by Weyman in New York in 1748. His lot was cast in the midst of a violent controversy among the clergy on the subject of ordination, the older clergy insisting upon the rite being performed in Holland. A bitter dispute was carried on fifteen years, disturbing the peace of neighborhoods, dividing families, and rending the churches into factions. Houses of worship were locked up, ministers were assaulted in the discharge of their functions, and Sunday profaned by scenes of violence and mobs. The party which opposed separation were called conferentie, the other cœtus. The dispute was not settled till 1772. Of course the domine was an actor in the scene.



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and popular in his manners, he thought it his duty to awaken in every breast that slumbering spirit of devotion, which he considered as lulled by security, or drooping in the meridian of prosperity, like tender plants in the blaze of sunshine. These he endeavored to refresh by daily exhortation, as well as by the exercise of his public duties. Though rigid in some of his notions, his life was spotless, and his concern for his people warm and affectionate; his endeavors to amend and inspire them with happier desires and aims, were considered as the labor of love, and rewarded by the warmest affection, and the most profound veneration; and what to him was of much more value, by a growing solicitude for the attainment of that higher order of excellence which it was his delight to point out to them. But while he thus incessantly "allured to brighter worlds, and led the way," he might perhaps insensibly have acquired a taste of dominion, which might make him unwilling to part with any portion of that most desirable species of power, which subjects to us, not human actions only, but the will which directs them. A vulgar ambition contents itself with power to command obedience, but the more exalted and refined ambition aims at a domination over mind. Hence the leaders of a sect, or even those who have powers to awake the dying embers of pious fervor, sway the hearts of their followers in a manner far more gratifying to them, than any enjoyment to be derived from tem-

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poral power. That this desire should unconsciously gain ground in a virtuous and ardent mind, is not wonderful; when one considers how the best propensities of the human heart are flattered, by supposing that we only sway the minds of others, to incline them to the paths of peace and happiness, and derive no other advantage from this tacit sovereignty, but that of seeing those objects of affectionate solicitude grow wiser and better.

To return to the apostolic and much beloved Frielinghuysen. The progress which this regiment made in the good graces of his flock, and the gradual assimilation to English manners of a very inferior standard, alarmed and grieved the good man not a little; and the intelligence he received from some of the elders of his church, who had the honor of lodging the more dissipated subalterns, did not administer much comfort to him. By this time the Anglomania was beginning to spread. A sect arose among the young people, who seemed resolved to assume a lighter style of dress and manners, and to borrow their taste in those respects from their new friends. This bade fair soon to undo all the good pastor's labors. The evil was daily growing; and what, alas, could Domine Frielinghuysen do but preach! This he did earnestly, and even angrily, but in vain. Many were exasperated but none reclaimed. The good domine, however, had those who shared his sorrows and resentments; the elder and wiser heads of families, indeed a great majority of the

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primitive inhabitants, were steadfast against innovation. The colonel of the regiment, who was a man of fashion and family, and possessed talents for both good and evil purposes, was young and gay; and being lodged in the house of a very wealthy citizen, who had before, in some degree, affected the newer modes of living, so captivated him with his good breeding and affability, that he was ready to humor any scheme of diversion which the colonel and his associates proposed. Under the auspices of this gallant commander, balls began to be concerted, and a degree of flutter and frivolity to take place, which was as far from elegance as it was from the honest artless cheerfulness of the meetings usual among them. The good domine more and more alarmed, not content with preaching, now began to prophesy; but like Cassandra, or to speak as justly, though less poetically, like his whole fraternity, was doomed always to deliver true predictions to those who never heeded them.

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# Chapter XXXV

## PLAYS ACTED — DISPLEASURE OF THE DOMINE

NOW the very ultimatum of degeneracy, in the opinion of these simple good people, was approaching; for now the officers, encouraged by the success of all their former projects for amusement, resolved to new fashion and enlighten those amiable novices whom their former schemes had attracted within the sphere of their influence; and, for this purpose, a private theatre was fitted up, and preparations made for acting a play; except the Schuylers and their adopted family, there was not perhaps one of the natives who understood what was meant by a play. And by this time, the town, once so closely united by intermarriages and numberless other ties, which could not exist in any other state of society, were divided into two factions: one consisting almost entirely of such of the younger class, as, having a smattering of New York education, and a little more of dress and vivacity, or perhaps levity, than the rest, were eager to mingle in the society, and adopt the manner of those strangers. It is but just, however, to add, that only a few of the more estimable were

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included in this number; these, however they might have been captivated with novelty and plausibility, were too much attached to their older relations to give them pain, by an intimacy with people to whom an impious neglect of duties the most sacred was generally imputed, and whose manner of treating their inferiors, at that distance from the control of higher powers, was often such as to justify the imputation of cruelty, which the severity of military punishments had given rise to. The play, however, was acted in a barn, and pretty well attended, notwithstanding the good domine's earnest charges to the contrary. It was *The Beaux Stratagem;* no favorable specimen of the delicacy or morality of the British theatre; and as for the wit it contains, very little of that was level to the comprehension of the novices who were there first initiated into a knowledge of the magic of the scene, yet they "laughed consumedly," as Scrub says, and actually did so, "because they were talking of him." They laughed at Scrub's gestures and appearance; and they laughed very heartily at seeing the gay young ensigns, whom they had been used to dance with, flirting fans, displaying great hoops, and, with painted cheeks and colored eye-brows, sailing about in female habiliments. This was a jest palpable and level to every understanding; and it was not only an excellent good one, but lasted a long while; for every time they looked at them when restored to their own habits, they laughed anew at the recol-

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lection of their late masquerade. "It is much," says Falstaff, "that a lie with a grave face, and a jest with a sad brow, will do with a fellow who never had the ache in his shoulders." One need only look back to the first rude efforts at comic humor which delighted our fathers, to know what gross and feeble jests amuse the mind, as yet a stranger to refinement. The loud and artless mirth so easily excited in a good-humored child, the *naïveté* of its odd questions and ignorant wonder, which delight us while associated with innocence and simplicity, would provoke the utmost disgust if we met with them where we look for intelligence and decorous observances. The simplicity of primitive manners, in what regards the petty amusements, and minute attentions, to which we have become accustomed, is exactly tantamount to that of childhood; it is a thing which, in our state of society, we have no idea of. Those who are from their depressed situation ignorant of the forms of polished life, know, at least, that such exist; and either awkwardly imitate them, or carefully avoid committing themselves, by betraying their ignorance. Here, while this simplicity (which by the bye, was no more vulgar than that of Shakespeare's Miranda), with its concomitant purity, continued unbroken by foreign modes, it had all the charm of undesigning childhood; but when half education and ill supported pretensions took place of this sweet attraction, it assumed a very different aspect, it was no

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longer simplicity, but vulgarity. There are things that every one feels and no one can describe; and this is one of them.

But to return to our Mirandas and their theatrical heroes: the fame of their exhibitions went abroad, and opinions were formed of them no way favorable to the actors or to the audience. In this region of reality, where rigid truth was always undisguised, they had not learned to distinguish between fiction and falsehood. It was said that the officers, familiar with every vice and every disguise, had not only spent a whole night in telling lies in a counterfeited place, the reality of which had never existed, but that they were themselves a lie, and had degraded manhood, and broke through an express prohibition in scripture, by assuming female habits; that they had not only told lies, but cursed and swore the whole night; and assumed the characters of knaves, fools, and robbers, which every good and wise man held in detestation, and no one would put on unless they felt themselves easy in them. Painting their faces, of all other things, seemed most to violate the Albanian ideas of decorum, and was looked upon as the most flagrant abomination. Great and loud was the outcry produced by it. Little skilled in sophistry, and strangers to all the arts "that make the worse appear the better reason," the young auditors could only say "that indeed it was very amusing; made them laugh heartily, and did harm to nobody."

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So harmless, indeed, and agreeable did this entertainment appear to the new converts of fashion, that *The Recruiting Officer* was given out for another night, to the great annoyance of M. Frielinghuysen, who invoked heaven and earth to witness and avenge this contempt, not only of his authority, but, as he expressed it, of the source from whence it was derived. Such had been the sanctity of this good man's life, and the laborious diligence and awful earnestness with which he inculcated the doctrines he taught, that they had produced a correspondent effect, for the most part, on the lives of his hearers, and led them to regard him as the next thing to an evangelist; accustomed to success in all his undertakings, and to "honor, love, obedience, troops of friends," and all that gratitude and veneration can offer to its most distinguished object, this rebellion against his authority, and contempt of his opinion (once the standard by which every one's judgment was regulated), wounded him very deeply. The abhorrence with which he inspired the parents of the transgressors, among whom were many young men of spirit and intelligence, was the occasion of some family disagreements, a thing formerly scarcely known. Those young people, accustomed to regard their parents with implicit reverence, were unwilling to impute to them unqualified harshness, and therefore removed the blame of a conduct so unusual to their spiritual guide; "and while he thought, good easy man,

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full surely his greatness was a ripening, nipt his root." Early one Monday morning, after the domine had, on the preceding day, been peculiarly eloquent on the subject of theatrical amusements, and pernicious innovations, some unknown person left within his door a club, a pair of old shoes, a crust of black bread, and a dollar. The worthy pastor was puzzled to think what this could mean; but had it too soon explained to him. It was an emblematic message, to signify the desire entertained of his departure. The stick was to push him away, the shoes to wear on the road, and the bread and money a provision for his journey. These symbols appear, in former days, to have been more commonly used, and better understood than at present; for instance, we find that when Robert Bruce, afterwards king of Scotland, was in a kind of honorable capacity in the court of England; when his friend, the earl of Gloucester, discovered that it was the intention of the king to imprison him in the tower, lest he should escape to Scotland and assert his rights, unwilling by word or writing to discover what had passed in council, and at the same time desirous to save his friend, he sent him a pair of gilt spurs and twelve crowns, and ordered the servant to carry them to him as returning what he had formerly borrowed from him. This mysterious gift and message was immediately understood; and proved the means of restoring Bruce, and with him the laws and liberty of his native king-

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dom. Very different, however, was the effect produced by this *mal àpropos* symbol of dislike. Too conscious, and too fond of popularity, the pastor languished under a sense of imaginary degradation, grew jealous, and thought every one alienated from him because a few giddy young people were stimulated by momentary resentments to express disapprobation in this vague and dubious manner. Thus, insensibly, do vanity and self-opinion mingle with our highest duties. Had the domine, satisfied with the testimony of a good conscience, gone on in the exercise of his duty, and been above allowing little personal resentments to mingle with his zeal for what he thought right, he might have felt himself far above an insult of this kind; but he found to his cost, that "a habitation giddy and unsure hath he that buildeth on the fickle heart" of the unsteady, wavering multitude.

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# Chapter XXXVI

## DOMINE FRIELINGHUYSEN LEAVES HIS PEOPLE

MADAME now returned to town with the colonel; and finding this general disorder and division of sentiments with regard to the pastor, as well as to the adoption of new modes, endeavored, with her usual good sense, to moderate and heal. She was always of opinion that the increase of wealth should be accompanied with a proportionate progress in refinement and intelligence; but she had a particular dislike to people's forsaking a respectable plainness of dress and manners for mere imperfect imitation, and inelegant finery. She knew too well the progress of society to expect, that, as it grew wealthy and numerous, it would retain its pristine purity; but then she preferred a "gradual abolition" of old habits, that people, as they receded from their original modes of thinking and living, might rather become simply elegant, than tawdrily fine; and though she all along wished, in every possible way, to promote the comfort of the brave men to whom the country owed so much, she by no means thought an indiscriminate admission of those strangers among the youth of the place, so unpractised in the ways

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of the world, an advisable measure; she was particularly displeased with the person in whose house the colonel of the regiment lodged, for so entirely domesticating a showy stranger, of whose real character he knew so little. Liberal and judicious in her views, she did not altogether approve the austerity of the domine's opinions, nor the vehemence of his language; and, as a Christian, she still less approved his dejection and concern at the neglect or rudeness of a few thoughtless young persons. In vain the colonel and Madame soothed and cheered him with counsel and kindness; night and day he mused on the imagined insult; nor could the joint efforts of the most respectable inhabitants prevent his heart from being corroded with the sense of imagined unkindness. At length he took the resolution of leaving those people so dear to him, to visit his friends in Holland, promising to return in a short time, whenever his health was restored, and his spirits more composed. A Dutch ship happened about this time to touch at New York, on board of which the domine embarked; but as the vessel belonging to Holland was not expected to return, and he did not, as he had promised, either write or return in an English ship, his congregation remained for a great while unsupplied, while his silence gave room for the most anxious and painful conjectures; these were not soon removed, for the intercourse with Holland was not frequent or direct. At length, however,

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the sad reality was but too well ascertained. This victim of lost popularity had appeared silent and melancholy to his shipmates, and walked constantly on deck. At length he suddenly disappeared, leaving it doubtful whether he had fallen overboard by accident, or was prompted by despair to plunge into eternity. If this latter was the case, it must have been the consequence of a temporary fit of insanity; for no man had led a more spotless life, and no man was more beloved by all that were intimately known to him. He was, indeed, before the fatal affront, which made such an undue impression on him, considered as a blessing to the place; and his memory was so beloved, and his fate so regretted, that this, in addition to some other occurrences falling out about the same time, entirely turned the tide of opinion, and rendered the thinking as well as the violent party, more averse to innovations than ever. Had the Albanians been Catholics, they would probably have canonized Dom. Frielinghuysen, whom they considered as a martyr to levity and innovation. He prophesied a great deal; such prophecy as ardent and comprehensive minds have delivered, without any other inspiration but that of the sound, strong intellect, which augurs the future from a comparison with the past, and a rational deduction of probable consequences. The affection that was entertained for his memory induced people to listen to the most romantic stories of his being landed

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on an island, and become a hermit; taken up into a ship when floating on the sea, into which he had accidentally fallen, and carried to some remote country, from which he was expected to return, fraught with experience and faith. I remember some of my earliest reveries to have been occupied by the mysterious disappearance of this hard-fated pastor.[1]

In the meanwhile new events were unfolding

1 There is an entry of a baptism by him on the 14th October, 1759, in the church *Doep Boek*, but strange to say, there is a letter in existence, written on the 10th October, 1759, by G. Abeel of New York to his relatives in Albany, in which he says that while he was writing, the ship in which Dom. Frielinghuysen had embarked was leaving the port, and according to custom the guns were firing parting salutes. That on the previous Sunday he preached in the new Dutch church, and when he sat down, after giving out the last psalm, the bench gave way and he fell to the floor, which was universally regarded as a bad omen. Among other gossip it was remarked that the ocean was fatal to his family, and the impression that he would never return pervaded the minds of the people standing about and discussing the matter. A letter to his wife is extant, showing that the domine was in London, expecting to embark on his return to America, since when nothing is known of him. Dr. Thomas De Witt says he went to Holland on business growing out of the impending controversy in the church, concerning the *cætus*, the ordination of the clergy; a party insisting that it was not imperative that the candidate should go to Holland to receive the rite there, as had been the practice. His child Eva, baptized 5 December, 1756, was buried 15 September, 1757 (*Munsell's Annals*). Another Eva was baptized 10 September, 1758 (*Pearson's Early Settlers*). These are the only children of Dom. Frielinghuysen, that are found recorded, and are said to have been grand-children of Geertruy Isabella Lydius, daughter of Domine John Lydius, pastor of the church 1700–9. Mrs. Frielinghuysen was a granddaughter of Lancaster Symes, an English officer, from whom and other relatives she inherited quite a fortune for the times. Office Secretary of State, Deeds, XVI.

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more fully to the Albanians the characters of their lately acquired friends. Scandal of fifty years standing must by this time have become almost pointless. The house where the young colonel, formerly mentioned, was billeted, and made his quarters good by every art of seductive courtesy, was occupied by a person wealthy, and somewhat vain and shallow, who had an only daughter; I am not certain, but I think she was his only child. She was young, lively, bold, conceited and exceedingly well-looking. Artless and fearless of consequences, this thoughtless creature saw every day a person who was, no doubt, as much pleased with her as one could be with mere youth, beauty, and kindness, animated by vivacity, and distinguished from her companions by all the embellishments which wealth could procure in that unfashioned quarter; his heart, however, was safe, as will appear from the sequel. Madame foresaw the consequences likely to result from an intimacy daily growing, where there was little prudence on the one side, and as little of that honor which should respect unsuspecting innocence on the other. She warned the family, but in vain; they considered marriage as the worst consequence that could ensue; and this they could not easily have been reconciled to, notwithstanding the family and fortune of the lover, had not his address and attentions charmed them into a kind of tacit acquiescence; for, as a Roman citizen in the proud days of the republic would have refused his daughter to

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a king, an Albanian, at one period, would rather have his daughter married to the meanest of his fellow-citizens, than to a person, of the highest rank in the army, because they thought a young person, by such a marriage, was not only forever alienated from her family, but from those pure morals and plain manners, in which they considered the greatest possible happiness to exist. To return:

While these gaieties were going on, and the unhappy domine embarking on the voyage which terminated his career, an order came for the colonel to march; this was the only commander who had ever been in town who had not spent any time, or asked any counsel at the Flats. Meanwhile his Calista (for such she was) tore her hair in frantic agonies at his departure; not that she in the least doubted of his returning soon to give a public sanction to their union, but lest he should prove a victim to the war then existing; and because, being very impetuous, and unaccustomed to control, the object of her wishes had been delayed to a future period. In a short time things began to assume a more serious aspect; and her father came one day posting to the Flats, on his way to the lakes, seeking counsel too late, and requesting the aid of their influence to bring about a marriage, which should cover the disgrace of his family. They had little hopes of his success, yet he proceeded; and finding the colonel deaf to all his argu-



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ments, he had recourse to entreaty, and finally offered to divest himself of all but a mere subsistence, and give him such a fortune as was never heard of in that country. This, with an angel, as the fond father thought her, appeared irresistible; but no! heir to a considerable fortune in his own country, and perhaps inwardly despising a romp, whom he had not considered from the first as estimable, he was not to be soothed or bribed into compliance. The dejected father returned disconsolate; and the astonishment and horror this altogether novel occurrence occasioned in the town, was not to be described. Of such a circumstance there was no existing precedent; half the city were related to the fair culprit, for penitent she could hardly be called. This unexpected refusal threw the whole city into consternation. One would have thought there had been an earthquake; and all the insulted domine's predictions rose to remembrance, armed with avenging terrors.

Many other things occurred to justify the domine's caution; and the extreme reluctance which the elders of the land showed to all such associations. All this Madame greatly lamented, yet could not acquit the parties concerned, whose duty it was, either to keep their daughters from that society for which their undisguised simplicity of heart unfitted them, or give them that culture and usage of life, which enables a young person to maintain a certain dignity, and to revolt at the first

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trespass on decorum. Her own protégés were instances of this; who, having their minds early stored with sentiments, such as would enable them truly to estimate their own value, and to judge of the characters and pretensions of those who conversed with them; all conducted themselves with the utmost propriety, though daily mixing with strangers, and were solicited in marriage by the first people in the province, who thought themselves happy to select companions from such a school of intelligence and politeness, where they found beauty of the first order, informed by mind, and graced by the most pleasing manners.

END OF VOL. I

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